# Not Separate, But Not Quite Equal:

# Undocumented High School Students, Dual Enrollment,

# Non-Resident College Tuition And The

# Dream of a College Education

by

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ABSTRACT

Immigration status and educational opportunities are at the forefront of the current national conversation regarding "DREAMers": children of immigrants brought to the United States at a young age who lack legal status but are raised and educated in the American system. In 2006, Arizona voters passed Proposition 300, in part prohibiting in-state tuition for state colleges and universities to individuals who cannot provide proof of citizenship or legal residency. For those DREAMers who hoped to attend college following high school, this policy affected their ability to enroll because of the increased tuition and lack of eligibility for state-sponsored financial aid. This law's impact is also present in Arizona's public high schools. High schools, in partnership with community colleges, have created a robust system of dual or concurrent enrollment courses: college classes offered to high school students as a means of accelerating their learning. In this arrangement, full payments for tuition are required by families or by the programs that support the students, creating a system in public schools where some students are able to participate while others cannot due to their residency status. The aim of this study was to determine the educational, social, and emotional effects of Proposition 300 upon undocumented secondary students. Through qualitative analysis, this study relies upon focus group interviews with high school graduates impacted by Proposition 300 before graduation. Interviews were also conducted with parents and with educators representing both secondary and higher education. A total of nine students, two parents, and four education professionals participated in semi-structured conversations over the course of several months in the fall of 2012. The data was collected, analyzed, and coded, extrapolating common themes related to the review of literature and information from the

participants. The findings describe the effects Proposition 300 has had as it pertains to undocumented students, their experience of their unequal access to dual or concurrent enrollment, the disconnect they have felt from their "documented" peers, and the emotional impact they have felt as a result of this law. Among the findings, the potential impact of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), enacted in August 2012, is explored.

# DEDICATION

To my mother, Carmen and my late father, Germain, who instilled in their children the importance of family, love, life-long learning, respect for others, humor, and humility.

To my partner in life, Hernan Fascella, who knows me better than I know myself, without whose love and ongoing support this journey would not have been possible.

Finally, to all the DREAMers that have been a part of my life inside and outside of school, especially those who participated in this study: your resiliency, optimism and drive inspires me.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

> *Education has a fundamental role in maintaining the fabric of our society. We cannot ignore the significant social costs borne by our Nation when select groups are denied the means to absorb the values and skills upon which our social order rests.*
>
> -Justice Brennan, Plyler v. Doe

As the debate over immigration in the United States intensifies, lawmakers across the country continue to grapple with the tensions between federal jurisdiction regarding immigration law, the emphatic call to action on the part of states, especially border states in the southwest region, and the issues of access to benefits for unauthorized or undocumented immigrants. One such public benefit is access to public education, and in particular, post-secondary education. While the United States (U.S.) Supreme Court decision *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) facilitated equal access for unauthorized immigrant children in public elementary and secondary schools, access to post-secondary studies varies widely from state-to-state (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2010; Dougherty, Nienhusser, & Vega, 2010). *Plyler v. Doe* continues to resonate in the ongoing discussion of how the United States of America defines equitable educational opportunities for "illegal aliens"/undocumented students. Undocumented students in public education across the country find themselves in a similar situation as those targeted by the Texas law struck down by the Supreme Court. That is, recent laws enacted in many states, including Arizona, punish the undocumented student and are "directed against children, and impose [d] its discriminatory burden on the basis of a legal characteristic over which children can have little control" (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982).

Notwithstanding the *Plyler v Doe* decision regarding K-12 access, recent changes in state laws intended to address illegal immigration have created significant barriers for undocumented students in accessing a college education. Specifically, laws passed in Arizona and Alabama among other states, send a clear signal to undocumented families intending to prompt an exodus from those states to perhaps friendlier environments, with the goal of immigrant "self-deportation" (Robertson, 2011).

To further complicate the issue, in the summer of 2012, President Barak Obama announced a significant change to immigration policy as implemented by the Department of Homeland Security. This alteration in the policy toward "child arrivals" to the United States puts in place a process whereby applicants can defer deportation under certain criteria and obtain permission to work legally, know as Deferred Action for Deportation of Childhood Arrivals (DACA, Preston, et al., 2012).

Still, undocumented students find themselves at the intersection of two conflicting policies – restrictive state immigration laws and new education reforms aimed in increasing high school students' career and college readiness. That is, undocumented students' access to higher education has become more and more difficult for undocumented students in some states at a time when the national conversation is focused on preparing all students in United States public schools to compete in a global society. In a climate where the rigor of our schooling remains under constant scrutiny the adoption of common core standards for college and career readiness highlights the lack of opportunity for those who may not have access to post-secondary studies because of their lack of funds (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2011). When students face laws regarding residency requirements for tuition, they are in effect denied access to learning

opportunities that are a gateway to educational and occupational advancement. Schools that attempt to create programs encouraging career and college readiness skills struggle to make these goals relevant for students who see limited opportunities for participation in post-secondary education and employment in advanced fields of study.

## Statement of the Problem

Many studies have addressed the experiences of undocumented college-aged students and high school graduates (Abrego, 2006; Díaz-Strong, Gómez, Luna-Duarte, & Meiners, 2010; Drachman, 2006; Flores, 2010; Gonzales, 2010; Perez, 2010; Perry, 2006; Silver, 2012; Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, Teranishi, & Suárez-Orozco, 2011; Rincón, 2010; Stevenson, 2004). Few studies have studied the experiences of undocumented students who have yet to graduate from high school. Particularly missing are the voices of students still enrolled in high school hoping to access advanced coursework in the form of college classes. For these students, the cost of out-of-state tuition constructs a barrier to equal access to college classes[1]. In completing this study and through its analysis and documentation, I will use my voice to represent the voices of these groups and continue the conversation regarding equity in education as it relates to undocumented high school students.

In their discussion of topic selection, Corbin and Strauss (2008) note "the touchstone of a potential researcher's experience may be a more valuable indicator of a potentially successful research endeavor than another more abstract source" (2008 p. 23).

[1] Students with legal residency are afforded an opportunity to enroll in college courses at in-state tuition rates, while those without pay a significantly higher non-resident tuition rate. (See Chapter 2)

As an educator working in a high school whose mission includes providing students with access to college courses but whose undocumented student population comprises roughly twenty-five percent of the student body, my personal experience provides that touchstone to this topic. The interpersonal relationships, stories, and experiences of the students, families, and school personnel with whom I work daily provides the backdrop for this research. The passage of Arizona's Proposition 300 (Prop 300) changed the experience of the stakeholders in this educational community.

Arizona's Prop 300 was passed by a state ballot initiative in 2006. Enacted into law the following year, it denies people who cannot provide proof of residency access to state-funded public benefits. Because of Proposition 300, students in post-secondary settings without documentation do not qualify for in-state tuition at publically funded colleges and universities in Arizona (Dougherty et al., 2010). The law requires public institutions of higher learning to adopt policies to establish tuition rates based upon a student's ability to show documentation verifying residency status, for example, a birth certificate, permanent resident card, visa, or state issued identification. The impact of this law reverberated throughout many communities – including neighborhoods with high immigrant populations as well as the education community, both secondary and post-secondary. Administrators, teachers, students and parents recognized the impact of the law related to undocumented college students. In the six years since the law passed, Arizona's state legislators continued to enact other state level immigration laws including SB1070, the bill that turned the attention of the nation toward Arizona's policies. Designed to enforce federal immigration laws at the local level, this law sparked demonstrations, protests, and boycotts of the state (Archibold, 2012).

With the public awareness shifted toward SB1070, the intensity of the issues surrounding Prop 300 diminished. The students enrolled in elementary school when Prop 300 passed are beginning to see the impact of this ballot initiative on their own lives as they approach their own college years. While these students experience the influence of this legislation, the broader conversation about immigration and education policy has evolved, the focus shifting away from these policies. For many students affected by this legislation, the question remains to what degree the passage of Prop 300 and other legislation represents a dramatic shift away from equal access to education provided for undocumented public school students by *Plyler v. Doe*.

## Purpose of the Study/Research Question

While much is known with regard to the impact of Prop 300 upon post-secondary students (Dougherty et al., 2010; Hebel, 2007), its effect upon secondary students remains relatively unexplored. A student's inability to meet the criteria set forth through Prop 300 essentially prevents equal access to college courses taken while in high school, which is contrary to the spirit of *Plyler v. Doe*.

Through this qualitative study, I addressed this gap in the literature and knowledge base by investigating the impact of Prop 300 in the lives of undocumented students in the state of Arizona and their ability to earn college credits while in high school. That is, what are the educational, social and emotional effects for undocumented students based upon their inability to meet the criteria set forth through Prop 300, preventing equal access to college courses taken while in high school? In addition to illuminating the students' experiences, I also explored the implications for secondary

school and college staff. Through this study, I aim to give voice to the experiences of undocumented high school students and the adults in their lives related to undocumented status and tuition policy, examining the intellectual, educational, and emotional consequences relative to this issue.

## Sensitivity

My journey in exploring the impact of Prop 300, immigration policies, and undocumented high school students relates specifically to the population I serve in my current work. In 2004, I was hired as a counselor on the staff of a small Arizona charter school that had adopted the "Early College" model. Located on a campus of a community college, Early Colleges serve students from traditionally underserved populations by creating opportunities for access to college courses as early as the ninth grade through concurrent enrollment. The goal of Early Colleges is to encourage the student to envision himself as a college student with the knowledge of how to be successful in that environment, and engendering a positive, future-oriented high school experience. Details of the model are explored at length in Chapter 2.

After the passage of Prop 300, I witnessed the devolution of a program without barriers for successful transition into college courses for undocumented students to a program that actively, albeit reluctantly, limits or denies these students equal access to college courses due to funding. The conversations with undocumented students that I have had and continue to have are difficult, however they are also tempered when viewed through the lens of their personal drive and resiliency. Their drive to succeed while living in a hostile environment resonates as a reflection of the "American Dream." They strive to improve the lives of their families, to become role models for their siblings, and to give

back to a country that they consider their home. The tension between their lack of citizenship and substantive membership in this American culture seems to create a sense of temporality rather than permanence for these transnational students, confounding their identities and connectedness to society as a whole.

Efforts to support undocumented students by providing a pathway to citizenship through legislation, such as the Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, continue to fail at the federal level leaving the states to establish policies for post-secondary access to education for these students (Díaz-Strong et al., 2010; Stevenson, 2004). Although proposals such as the DREAM Act aim to provide pathways to citizenship for undocumented high school graduates, it would not address this particular barrier for undocumented students because the students' eligibility for citizenship would be partially dependent upon earning a high school diploma. Even though *Plyler v. Doe* guarantees undocumented students equal access to a K-12 education, Prop 300 essentially prevents them from participating in dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment courses while in high school. Deferred action may alter that course, but the challenge remains for those individuals who have not qualified or choose not to apply.

## Significance of the Study

In order to understand the policy as it relates to undocumented high school students, it is important to fully understand the impact of admissions and tuition criteria for undocumented college students. Because these policies present themselves overtly to students enrolling full-time in college, they may be less apparent to those enrolling as part of their high school program. High school teachers, counselors, and administrators

may also be less informed regarding the policies than their counterparts in higher education, resulting in additional layers of misunderstanding and a reduced ability to effectively assist a high school student that may have questions that need to be answered.

Admissions and tuition criteria differ from state to state, ranging from California and Texas providing in-state tuition benefits to undocumented students, to states who charge out of state tuition to students without proof of residency (Flores, 2010; Dougherty et al., 2010; Johnson & Janosik, 2008). Currently, eleven states offer students without documentation the opportunity to attend college and pay in-state tuition, whereas other states are either silent on the issue or actively deny access to the lower in-state tuition rate. Denial of in-state tuition creates a situation in which funding post-secondary coursework becomes nearly impossible, especially taking into account the low socio-economic status typical of students who are undocumented (Stevenson, 2004; Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Kaushal, 2008). Given the in-state tuition requirement for these students, in conjunction with their socio-economic status, the inequity in accessing higher education "constitutes a de facto ban, since the majority of these students come from impoverished conditions and simply cannot afford the higher fees" (Rincón , 2010 p. 14).

While recent studies demonstrate that states providing tuition benefits see an increase in the college enrollment of undocumented Latino immigrants, the trend appears reversed in states that do not provide in-state tuition to students without documentation (Flores & Chapa, 2009; Flores, 2010). Arizona, for instance, saw a decline in enrollment in its community college system following the passage of its Proposition 300 (Prop 300), denying in-state tuition to individuals who could not confirm legal residency in the state (Hebel, 2007; Dougherty et al., 2010). The conversation surrounding tuition benefits at

the post-secondary level are numerous; however there is little discussion in the literature regarding the impact such policies have on secondary student programs.

## Delimitations

While the experience of the students and families involved may be atypical due to their participation as students in pursuit of accelerated learning options, their immigrant experience allows the reader to generalize the impact of such policies on an individual and family outside of this study. This study takes place six years following the passage of Prop 300 in Arizona; however, the conversations and climate related to immigration policy remains heightened. For example, the 2012 national elections presented opportunities for continued debate regarding immigration issues and policies, especially in light of the implementation of Deferred Action. With continued focus on the "problem" of immigration, working with undocumented students remains consistent until a change in federal immigration policy or state law occurs. The reality of this situation falls squarely on the shoulders of the undocumented student pursuing higher learning through accelerated learning options, irrespective of political discourse.

## Definition of Terms

*Accelerated Learning Options:* programs of study that provide students in secondary schools the opportunity to earn credit toward a college degree while still enrolled in high school. Such options provide enrichment, accelerate academics, and ease the transition from secondary to post-secondary environments (Puyear, Thor, & Mills, 2001). Accelerated Learning Options can be offered in a variety of concepts: Advanced Placement or AP courses offered through the College Board, International

Baccalaureate or IB, concurrent and dual enrollment offered through local community colleges.

*Concurrent Enrollment:* in Arizona, ARS §15-1821 established opportunities for high school students under age eighteen to enroll in college courses while in high school provided they meet the criteria for the course established by the state Board of Regents and the college (Special Admission of Students Under 18, 2012). Credits earned at a college, converted to Carnegie Units at a high school, can satisfy the requirements needed for a high school diploma, while retaining the college credits earned. Students enrolled concurrently attend classes on the campus of the college in which they are enrolled.

*Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals:* an immigration policy implemented in August 2012 by executive order under the Obama administration, the policy provides a means for individuals that were brought to the United States at a young age to defer deportation hearings if certain eligibility requirements have been met. These criteria include: arrival in the country before age 16, currently under the age of 30, have lived in the United States for five years minimum, currently attend school or have graduated from high school or are veterans in good standing, do not possess a criminal record. Deferred action provides a means to work legally in the country through the acquisition of a work permit and a social security number.

*Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act):* an act introduced in Congress over multiple sessions with the intent of providing a path to citizenship for those individuals who immigrated to the United States at a young age and are present in the country without documentation (Stevenson, 2004). Advocates of the DREAM Act seek a positive solution to the issues that affect undocumented youth.

Historically, the DREAM Act has failed to make it out of committee to the floor of the Congress for a vote.

*DREAMer:* a colloquialism used to refer to individuals that meet the parameters of the population addressed in the DREAM Act.

*Dual Enrollment:* a subset of concurrent enrollment, dual enrollment was established by state statute (ARS § 15-1821.01) to allow for the instruction of college courses on high school campuses as a part of the traditional high school schedule. Agreements between districts or charter schools and the college require approval of both entities. High school instructors who meet the college requirements for specific content teach dual enrollment courses.

*Early College Model:* a national high school reform model endorsed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Jobs for the Future that presents a blended model of instruction, offering high school and college courses to high school students with the goal of completing high school and up to two years of college simultaneously. This model focuses on those students with significant barriers to accessing a college education: low socioeconomic status, first generation college students, English language learners, and other populations underrepresented in higher education (Jobs for the Future, 2009).

*Grand Canyon Diploma*: enacted by the Arizona state legislature in 2010, the Grand Canyon Diploma, also known as "Move On When Ready", provides an optional path to high school graduation that allows students who pass an exit exam following tenth grade to enroll in higher education through AP, IB, Carnegie, or community college enrollment.

*No Child Left Behind (NCLB):* Passed by Congress and signed into law in 2001 by President Bush, NCLB implemented changes in educational policy through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB included efforts to promote accountability in K-12 education and in closing the "achievement gap" found in minority student populations as well as special populations, such as English language learners and IDEA eligible students (NCLB, 2002).

*Proposition 300 (Prop 300)*: an Arizona law passed through statewide ballot initiative, Prop 300 "prohibits undocumented immigrants from receiving in-state tuition and financial aid, taking adult education courses, or receiving childcare benefits" (Dougherty et al., 2010, p. 150).

*Race to the Top (RTT):* Introduced by President Obama in 2009, Race to the Top provided grants to states administered through the Department of Education in order to reform education around four areas: college/workplace readiness for all students, data collection, recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers and principals, and "turning around" low achieving schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

*Undocumented Student:* students present in the United States without documentation of legal residency.

**Abbreviations Used**

ACE: Achieving a College Education

ARS: Arizona Revised Statute

ASU: Arizona State University

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

DREAM Act: Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act

IRB: Institutional Review Board

MCCD: Maricopa Community College District

NCLB: No Child Left Behind

Prop 300: Proposition 300

RTT: Race to the Top

## Summary

This chapter described the important connection between the experiences of undocumented high school students and Arizona's Proposition 300, which limits these students' access to college courses prior to receiving a high school diploma. The chapter introduced the argument that although the decision in *Plyler v. Doe* mandates equal opportunities for elementary and secondary students regardless of immigration status, that equity is lost in light of the passage of these types of laws. Additionally, this chapter commented on the author's personal connection to the topic, discussing briefly the experience of working in an Early College program.

In previewing upcoming chapters of this dissertation, Chapter 2 focuses on a review of the literature providing an exploration of theoretical constructs applicable to this discussion, including segmented assimilation, substantive membership, and transnationalism. Additionally, the author presents information regarding accelerated learning options. Chapter 3 describes the methods used in this qualitative study, discussing the selection of interviewees and details of the process relevant to data collection. An analysis of the study relative to the research question appears in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 offers conclusions based upon the study, suggesting connections to the current discourse regarding undocumented students in secondary schools providing an

exploration of the generalization of this study's outcomes and its possible connection to further research.

# CHAPTER 2

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reviewing academic literature surrounding policies that affect college tuition and immigration status reveals a lack of specificity with regard to the effect such policies have upon secondary school students who seek access to college courses while attending high school (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Abrego, 2006; Díaz-Strong et al., 2010; Flores, 2010; Russell, 2007; Stevenson, 2004; Rincón, 2010; Perez, 2012). In this chapter, I discuss three topics: 1) the undocumented high school student experience of assimilation and membership, 2) tuition policies related to immigration status and 3) accelerated learning options for high school students. The information regarding undocumented students includes a discussion of transnationalism and two theoretical frameworks--substantive membership and segmented assimilation. The review then examines the intersection of status and tuition cost, which informs the discussion of policies that impact high school students apropos of the expenses related to tuition and changes in policy under Arizona's Prop 300. Finally, a discussion of several trends in accelerated learning options designed to award college credit to high school students illustrates some ways in which the adoption of laws that deny in-state tuition affect undocumented high school students.

## Transnationalism

For this research, a key to the discussion of the impact of tuition policy toward undocumented students relates to their perception as immigrants relative to their status and their transnational identities. Utilizing the description provided by Abowitz and Harnish (2006), the transnational identity ignores geopolitical borders. Undocumented

youth from Latin America are global citizens, pan-ethnically Latino, predominately Mexican and culturally American. Increasingly, the involvement in and process of globalization enables such undocumented youth to reinforce ethnic pride, civic engagement, and a transnational status regardless of formal citizenship (Drotbohm , 2011). The households they live in may follow the mores and norms of their cultural heritages while the environment they learn in and ascribe to in public schools reflects the "American" ethos (Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2008). With membership in these two cultures, a student's bicultural and transnational states affect their educational experience, yet the context of their transnationalism is lost in the educational system: "schools, teachers and peers (inside school) had little knowledge of their experiences as transnationals" (Sánchez, 2007 p. 496). The book *Funds of Knowledge* (González , et al., 2005) reveals the tendency toward a dismissiveness of the Latino families' experience as a valuable factor in any educational partnership. While conventional wisdom praises the benefit of bilingualism or biculturalism in a global economy, the gaps in educational attainment between transnational students and their "mononational" peers becomes a disadvantage, affecting the ability to succeed on an equal level (Zúñiga, & Hamann, 2009).

The process of cultural integration forms from the individual's needs, not from a formalized knowledge base or context supported by agencies, formal or informal. Persons who seek support for their integration must seek assistance through neighborhoods, family members and schools (Délano, 2010). Unbound by the nation-state demarcation of citizenship, such individuals personify the concept of the transnational citizen. Members of marginalized populations experience a complexity of identity and citizenship related to how those individuals experience their daily lives in a

global context (Myers, & Zaman, 2009). As a marginalized group, the undocumented child navigates a world surrounded by various land mines related to the child's status, some obvious, others discrete. The inability to feel at ease in these surroundings hinders the ability of the student to assimilate completely, further solidifying the unsettled nature of his/her transnational identity (Joseph, 2011).

Transnationalism provides the context for the exploration of two theoretical frameworks offering insights into motivation and connectivity within the immigrant community. Substantive membership addresses incorporation in a culture while segmented assimilation explores a view of assimilation taking into account the push upward or downward relative to that process. Both frameworks help develop an understanding of the experience of the undocumented student. In understanding the intersection of these frameworks, I expand the extant literature by understanding the role of identity and the potential effect on membership due to a lack of access for undocumented students set in motion by Prop 300.

## Substantive Membership

Substantive membership as described by Perry (2006) postulates that regardless of official residency status, individuals ascribe their membership in a society based upon many qualities, both tangible and intangible, related to the lives of each stakeholder. "The principles of residency, social awareness, reciprocation, investment, identification, patriotism, destiny, and law abidingness form a philosophical framework of membership that explains what it means to be a member of a political community/nation-state" (Perry, 2006, p. 31). Of these principles, *destiny* resonates profoundly when discussing undocumented students and their futures, especially opportunities for post-secondary

education. In his study, Perry demonstrates that the aspirations of these students, like their peers who have citizenship or legal status, involves improving their lives and the lives of their families and communities. Destiny represents a vision of the future, unrelated to the broader political context connected instead to the life of the community and the individual's membership in that community (Perry, 2006). While this may not be a revelation in the discussion of the immigrant experience, it reinforces the overall construct and the desire to succeed academically beyond high school. Additionally, successful participation in the educational process provides a model of incorporation for upcoming students from the community as well as a base of knowledge shared openly with others (Enriquez, 2011).

The drive to succeed as a child of immigrants, regardless of status, plays a significant role in the choice to attend college for many undocumented students and provides motivation to improve their lives and the lives of their families (Perez, 2010). As an undocumented child, identification as "American" extends beyond the drive to succeed. Full participation in the American way of life, reinforced and fostered in the public school system, is essentially unattainable for those without a formal pathway to citizenship. For immigrant families, as throughout the history of this country, public schools become the nexus of Americanization, opening a doorway to a better life in the "land of opportunity" (Tyack, 1974; Morales, Socorro, & Murry, 2009). Policies that deny access to further their education and suppress this system, overtly or covertly, disrupt this historical pattern.

The contemporary immigrant experience in the Latino community has displaced what is the canon of immigration in this country. There exists a dichotomy of attitudes

related to immigration and the process of "membership" in this society (Filindra, Blanding, & Garcia Coll, 2011). The grainy images of boats arriving to Ellis Island from Europe, its cargo the immigrants that "built the nation" speaks to what Delgadillo (2011) refers to as the "ideal immigrant": of an age and of a time. There appears to be little appreciation for the work of other immigrant groups; the migration of those from Latin America, Africa, and China becomes somehow less profoundly related to the building of this nation, not fully integrated into the melting pot (Tyack, 1974). This tension informs the debate regarding immigration and the ability of those "other" immigrants to ascribe for substantive membership as an "American", challenging the process of assimilation as a result.

## Segmented Assimilation

There are many theories of assimilation, historically ranging from Anglo-conformity and the Melting Pot, through theories such as segmented assimilation. In his early work on assimilation, Gordon (1961) proposes that assimilation as a blanket term belies the complexity of the process relative to the immigrant experience, generational shifts, and cultural integration. Gordon's work continues to be part of the conversation with the recognition that the complex journey of assimilation develops in ways that permit an individual to ascribe elements of a culture to build an affiliation upon that fit within their own racial and ethnic identity. In an attempt to recognize this complexity, segmented assimilation expands the discussion of these elements. As proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993), segmented assimilation represents an adaptation of the traditional trajectory of assimilation:

> Instead of a relatively uniform mainstream whose mores and prejudices dictate a common path of integrations, we observe today several distinct forms of adaptation. One of them replicates the time-honored portrayal of growing acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle-class; a second leads straight in the opposite direction to permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass; still a third associates rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's values and tight solidarity. This pattern of segmented assimilation immediately raises the question of what makes some immigrant groups become susceptible to the downward route and what resources allow others to avoid this course. (Portes & Zhou, 1993 p. 82)

Altschul, Oyserman and Bybee (2008) further explore the idea of segmented assimilation as a process of acculturation impacted by patterns of racial and ethnic identities. The experience of discrimination, economic limitations, and membership in a "low status" minority group encourages a downward trend of economic stability (Altschul et al., 2008). Segmented assimilation as a process for the second generation in immigrant families educated and acculturated in the American system may lead to downward assimilation as impacted by the mode of incorporation and the experience of the group resulting from the majority treatment of that race or ethnicity (Haller, Portes, & Lynch, 2011; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). This process complicates traditional assimilation models and their impact on varying types of mobility, including upward and downward mobility (Tovar & Feliciano, 2009).

In an attempt to illuminate the limitations and the impact of segmented assimilation specifically upon undocumented youth, Abrego notes: "By leaving the structural effects of undocumented status on the incorporation process largely unexamined, these studies tend to underemphasize the importance of undocumented status for the life chances and educational motivations of undocumented youth" (2006, p. 215). Given the inequity of access to financial aid among peers, based upon status, the

inability to pursue funds for post-secondary education may establish a sense of cognitive dissonance within students who lived their lives as "Americans" since a very young age, but do not have access to the federal financial aid system (Russell, 2007; Perez, 2010). The pressure to perform placed upon immigrant children by self and family positions undocumented students in a situation where their sense of self related to the process of "Americanization" and citizenship, coupled with the realization and impact of the reality of their status, challenges the idea of being an "American."

There exists a social impact of segmented assimilation outside of the experience of education. The inability to participate in other milestones of American teenaged life, such as earning a drivers license, further isolate the experience of the undocumented student. For the undocumented student, this leads to an internalized renegotiation of what it means to have membership in a society and how that individual develops formal and informal connections. Throughout their assimilation in the American educational system, undocumented students hear the message and live through the symbolism inherent in public education based in part on the concept of the "American Dream" – steeped in the rhetoric surrounding a level playing field and equal access to opportunities. Succinctly stated, "Schooling by its very nature is a prime vehicle for indoctrinating the young in a core of common values and political principles, teaching them a common language along with civic virtue, essentially making them good citizens'" (Salomone, 2008). This frame of reference, long a part of the American national psyche, belies the reality of students whose access to equal opportunity ends when they are no longer legally afforded such opportunities.

For those youth growing up bicultural and educated in this American system, the overt challenges to their self-concept and their ability to achieve the "American Dream" places them at odds with the political reality of their situation (Filindra et al., 2011; Chavez & Provine, 2009). Career days, technical education, and state requirements for career planning, such as Arizona's Educational Career Action Plan (Arizona Department of Education, 2008) serve as daily reminders of the potential dead-end an undocumented student faces when he crosses the stage during high school graduation. Abrego (2006) describes their conundrum: "Many have internalized the U.S. values and expectations that equate academic success to economic rewards and stability. Ironically, their social incorporation sensitizes them further to the contradiction that, despite their academic success, they are barred from the opportunity to integrate legally, educationally, and economically in U.S. society" (p. 221). Facing the ever increasing cost of tuition along with the limitations of available private scholarships and the extremely limited access to good paying jobs, a student's prospect of a brighter future, the goal of many immigrant families, diminishes. Undocumented students who successfully overcome the lack of financial aid and earn a college degree results in a group of educated young adults, eager to use their knowledge and join the workforce but unable to do so, relying upon permanent, full and legal recognition as the lynchpin of membership rather than the attainment of educational milestones (Perez, 2012; Enriquez, 2011).

President Obama's decision regarding the deportation proceedings of undocumented students, or "DREAMers" as they have become known vernacularly, may have changed the conversation for the time being. In his Rose Garden speech on June 15, 2012, the President described the policy shift as a stop-gap measure, designed to provide

immediate relief to those who fall into the 1.5 generation of undocumented citizens: "It makes no sense to expel talented young people, who, for all intents and purposes, are Americans --they've been raised as Americans; understand themselves to be part of this country -- to expel these young people who want to staff our labs, or start new businesses, or defend our country simply because of the actions of their parents -- or because of the inaction of politicians" (Obama, 2012). Thus a new immigration policy, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), has become a reality for a large number of DREAMers.

How this change will affect issues of transnationalism, assimilation, and membership remains to be seen. This policy, enacted by executive order, occurred during an election year, with an opposition party in Congress and a Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, who publically disagreed with the actions of the President. This complicated the policy measure's future; however the President's re-election may continue to support action toward reform. Regardless of the actions taken by the White House, the impacts upon state policies that deny in-state tuition to undocumented students are in flux.

The juxtaposition of state law and federal immigration policy continues to be a factor for undocumented students. This is further illustrated by the actions of Arizona's Governor, Jan Brewer, taken the day that DACA officially began, August 15, 2012. In a press conference, the Governor announced that she had issued an executive order reinforcing her support of anti-illegal immigrant policies passed into law in Arizona. Most pointedly, she announced that DACA-eligible individuals would not be eligible for state benefits, such as a driver's license, as reflected in the state's anti-illegal immigrant laws (Jonsson, 2012).

As policies shift, the interplay of culture, membership, citizenship, and assimilation complicates an individual's definition of self. As a product of an educational system that focuses on future-oriented thinking and emphasizes long-range career planning, an undocumented student, finding themselves at the nexus of these tensions, may experience feeling disillusioned by their prospects. Recent shifts toward the Common Core standards and the reauthorization/rebranding of NCLB as Race to the Top places a great deal of emphasis on College and Career Readiness – focusing educators on instruction that will ultimately end in college or work (Duncan, 2009; Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2011). For undocumented students, their Americanized culture, the flux of their citizenship, and their membership in the American society places their assimilation at a crossroads that meets them head-on when they attempt to engage in post-secondary studies at all levels. In Arizona, this crossroad occurs when submitting applications for colleges, which now require the completion of residency questionnaires, pushing the concepts related to these frameworks to the forefront of the student's life. College admission personnel are charged with verification of residency, and essentially become the face of immigration enforcement, rather than a representative of higher education.

## Tuition and Immigration Status

An important entry point for post-secondary education, community colleges traditionally provide a low-cost option for its students. For the undocumented student, this cost represents a compromise in their desire to seek higher education and the affordability of tuition without the benefit of financial aid (Perez, 2012). In his book *Americans by Heart: Undocumented Latino Students and the Promise of Higher*

*Education,* Perez notes that in spite of the level of success in high school that could enable a student to transition directly to a four-year university, community colleges represent a practical choice in pursuit of a degree because of the affordability (2012).

Admissions and tuition criteria for undocumented students differs from state to state, ranging from California and Texas providing in-state tuition benefits to undocumented students, to states who charge out-of-state tuition to students without proof of residency (Flores, 2010; Dougherty et al., 2010; Johnson & Janosik, 2008). Eleven states offer students without documentation the opportunity to attend college and pay in-state tuition, whereas other states are either silent on the issue or actively deny access to the lower in-state tuition rate (Gándara & Contreras, 2009). This policy context makes funding post-secondary coursework nearly impossible, especially taking into account the low socio-economic status typical of students who are undocumented (Stevenson, 2004; Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Drachman, 2006; Kaushal, 2008). Given the out-of-state cost of tuition for these students combined with their socio-economic status, the inequity in accessing in-state tuition "constitutes a de facto ban, since the majority of these students come from impoverished conditions and simply cannot afford the higher fees" (Rincón, 2010 p. 14).

**Arizona's Prop 300**

Over the last decade, the state legislature of Arizona turned its attention to immigration policy in part as a reaction to amplified border crossing activity across the state's international border following the increased federal enforcement along the California and Texas borders during the 1990's (Dougherty et al., 2010). Coupled with the tense atmosphere in the country surrounding the fallout from the attacks that occurred

on September 11, 2001, leaders in Arizona were of the opinion that the federal government was derelict in its duty to protect the state: "These vociferous critics of unauthorized immigration saw the U.S. government as failing to take action and argued that the state therefore had to take matters into its own hands" (Dougherty et al., 2010, p. 160). In addition to a variety of legislation from the state-elected officials, Arizona also saw the passage of statewide propositions meant to circumvent the potential veto of then Governor of Arizona, Janet Napolitano (Dougherty et al., 2010).

Prop 300 passed by a state ballot initiative in the fall of 2006, with 72% of the electorate voting for the initiative (Arizona Department of State, 2006). As passed, the law clearly sets forth a policy change related to undocumented college students:

> A person who is not a citizen of the United States, who is without lawful immigration status and who is enrolled as a student at any university under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Board of Regents or at any community college under the jurisdiction of a community college district in this state is not entitled to tuition waivers, fee waivers, grants, scholarship assistance, financial aid, tuition assistance or any other type of financial assistance that is subsidized or paid in whole or in part with state monies. (Arizona Department of State, 2006, p. 194)

The passage of Prop 300 illustrates the conflicting points of view regarding immigration policy as a whole and became part of a series of laws passed either through direct citizen action (ballot propositions) or through the legislative process. Published by the office of then Secretary of State Jan Brewer, the Arizona General Election guide provided contrasting arguments for and against its passage. Figure 1 provides some of the themes represented in the debate before the election.

| Theme | Argument "For" | Argument "Against" |
|---|---|---|
| Tax/Financial Burden | Taxpayers should not subsidize tuition costs for illegal immigrants. | Unfunded mandate in the form of reporting procedures will require additional staffing and the diversion of funds from student programs. |
| Legal Issues | Taxpayers should not support those who violate the law and sovereignty of the state. | *Plyler v Doe* prevents immigrant students from being denied an education. |
| Fairness | Increased burden on state programs, robbing citizens of services their taxes support. | Students who have succeeded academically should not be punished for their status. |
| Economic Interests | Taxpayer funded programs to support working families should benefit legal residents, including access to child care necessary for families to work. | Future economic development requires and educated workforce, regardless of status, which supports the overall state economy. |
| Immigration Law | Allowing equal access benefits removes incentives to apply for legitimate membership. The state should not "aid and abet" those who broke the law to live in Arizona. | This measure does not address the broader problems of federal immigration policy and is misguided in its focus. |

*Figure 1.* Arizona 2006 ballot proposition guide – arguments "for" and "against" Proposition 300 (Arizona Department of State, 2006).

Enacted into law the following year, this proposition denied the expenditure of state funds to financially benefit persons who cannot provide proof of residency.

As a result, students in post-secondary settings without documentation no longer qualify for in-state tuition at publically funded colleges and universities in Arizona (Hebel, 2007). Undocumented students suddenly saw their tuitions increase in one semester and recognized that they were no longer able to hide their status from school officials. Colleges recognized the impact of this proposition immediately. Merit

scholarships based upon state funding were no longer available to undocumented students. Institutions of higher learning enacted policies as required by this law to establish tuition rates based upon the production of documentation to verify the residency status for every student in the form of a birth certificate, permanent resident card, visa, or state issued identification. For example, the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD), one of the largest community college districts in the nation, enacted policies to comply with the intent of the law, providing an undiluted view of the results of this policy.

MCCD serves the greater metropolitan Phoenix area and includes a system of ten colleges serving approximately one-quarter of a million students annually (Maricopa Community College District, 2011a). Compliance with Prop 300 for MCCD meant a small increase in the form of a fee ($25/credit) added to the tuition of non-residents taking fewer than seven credit hours while those students enrolled in greater than seven credits saw that fee tripled for all enrolled credits ($75/credit). This change created an increase in out-of-state tuition payments across the district, more than doubling the number of non-residents across all ten community colleges (Hebel, 2007). This structure remained in place until April 2011 when the governing board eliminated the credit hour division for non-residents, citing budgetary issues, effectively tripling the tuition rate starting with the first credit taken, as noted in Table 2 (Maricopa Community College District, 2011b).

Table 1

*2010 and 2011 Tuition by Prop 300 Status and Per Credit Tuition Rate*

| Prop 300 Residency Status | Less than seven credits (per 3 credit course) | Seven credits and above (per 3 credit course) |
|---|---|---|
| Resident 2010 | $71 ($213) | $71 ($213) |
| Non-Resident 2010 | $96 ($288) | $312 ($936) |
| Resident 2011 | $76 ($228) | $76 ($228) |
| Non-Resident 2011 | $317 ($951) | $317 ($951) |

While the evaluation of the immediate impact of this policy change is beyond the scope of this study, the expense of a full-time college course load helps to appreciate its effect. A full-time load for a college student would require enrollment in fifteen credits; therefore resident tuition for one semester as a full-time student would be $1,140 while the same courses for a non-resident would cost $4,755. This results in an annual tuition bill of $2,280 for residents and $9,510 for non-residents. Over the course of earning an associate's degree, completing a minimum of sixty credits, a resident would pay $4,560 while a non-resident would pay $19,020, not including any additional registration fees, textbooks, supplies, or living expenses.

While this tuition structure remains in place, DACA has become part of the equation offering a means for undocumented students that attend MCCD colleges to qualify for in-state tuition. On September 9, 2012, the district released a statement that clarified its position reflecting on the language of Prop 300 as inclusive of work permits to be used as acceptable documentation in setting tuition rates for DACA students

(Maricopa Community College District, 2012). The policy shift was praised by DREAM Act advocates in the county who note the potential for positive economic benefit to the state by providing a better-educated workforce, attracting employers to the state, while those who support the fees saw this as an attempt to undermine the intent of Prop 300 (Spring, 2012).

With much of the literature focusing upon the policy relative to college students, it is important to note the impact of these laws are felt at the secondary school level, directly related to a student's ability to take college courses while in high school. Programs that provided college credit as a benefit to its students by paying tuition for the student may no longer be able to provide equal access to those courses. Additionally, undocumented students from families at the lowest segments of the socioeconomic scale may no longer be able to afford to participate. For students seeking accelerated learning options, the effect of these policies are substantial.

## Accelerated Learning Options

Hoffman, Vargas, and Santos (2009) refer to "accelerated learning options" as those options focused upon accelerating access to college courses and the transition from high school to post-secondary studies in a manner that supports traditionally underserved students. Programs offering enrichment beyond the high school curriculum through direct access to college courses offer students an opportunity to participate at a level beyond the traditional high school curriculum. These programs strive to promote success, which, in academics, often serves as a means of facilitating upward assimilation (Bankston & Zhou, 2002). Researchers have investigated the positive impact that accelerated learning opportunities can have upon underserved youth, supporting the notion that successful

completion of college credits correlates to increased potential for post-secondary success (Hoffman et al., 2009). While supporting the transition of students from traditionally underserved populations led policymakers, colleges, and secondary schools to create unique programs increasing access to accelerated learning options, the inability of undocumented students to participate equally reinforces rather than removes barriers for those who represent the image of the "ideal candidate" for such opportunities. Unable to participate equally in such programs not only denies them the opportunity but may influence their ability to succeed in a post-secondary context. Three such accelerated learning options affected by Prop 300 include dual enrollment, Early College and the Grand Canyon Diploma.

**Dual Enrollment**

Public high schools across Arizona offer students a pathway to accelerated learning options through dual enrollment agreements established between colleges and local school districts. These agreements confer college credit to courses taught at high schools that meet the instructional requirements and competencies set forth by the college. An alternative to dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment allows credits to transfer back to the high school for courses taken by a student on campus at a community college campus; credits earned help the student meet state requirements for high school graduation (Hoffman et al., 2009). For example, a high school senior may enroll in English Composition in place of taking high school senior English, counting that credit as part of their college degree as well as using that credit to satisfy their high school graduation requirements. Such programs provide students the opportunity to obtain dual credit for college courses, supported by colleges, secondary schools, and state education

authorities, acting upon the concept of seamless transitions for students beyond high school (Puyear et al., 2001). Families are responsible for paying the fees for tuition. However, access to tuition assistance requires proof of residency; therefore efforts to provide equalized funding for students conflicts directly with state requirements for residency. The net effect of this policy is excluding undocumented students from impoverished families from participation because those students do not qualify for in-state tuition. Further, the policy creates a class of students unable to access college courses equal to resident students. As a "hidden" population, the impact upon the undocumented student population may be difficult to quantify and may go relatively unnoticed in large comprehensive high schools.

While dual enrollment opportunities do not overtly discriminate against undocumented students with regard to access, the requirements for tuition and documentation to satisfy state laws such as Prop 300 effectively disenfranchise those students, creating barriers to access unique to this population (Abrego, 2006). Their status becomes an open secret as they become involved in college. The fear of deportation increases their stress related to a "fear of discovery of their immigration status as they attempt to be full participants in programs and opportunities offered at their college campuses" (Rodriguez & Cruz, 2009 p. 2411). In light of this change, programs that serve undocumented students no longer possess the ability to equalize such opportunities between impoverished resident and their non-resident cohort students. Schools offering opportunities for college courses must function within the law as written, essentially creating a class of students within their population unable to afford,

and therefore participate equally in advanced coursework contrary to the spirit of *Plyler v. Doe*.

**The Early College Model**

Another program model affected by in-state tuition policies is the "early college" high school. Envisioned as a means to increase college participation among underserved populations, the early college model expanded over the course of the last decade with the support of philanthropic organizations, such as the Gates, Carnegie and Ford foundations (Brewer, Stern, & Ahn, 2007). The principles of the early college include helping high school students who are first-generation college students from low-income communities access a college education (Hoffman et al., 2009; Kisker, 2006; Olsen, 2010). Key to the success of the early college model is its adherence to its core principles, including the development of significant relationships between students and adults, supporting learners in their academic, social, and emotional development (Jobs for the Future, 2009). While the development of relationships fosters the academic engagement of its students, the crux of the program lies in its connection to college courses for its students (Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009).

Providing traditionally underserved youth a means of accessing college serves as a transformative experience, expanding the youth's self concept as that of a "college" student, prepared to take on the rigor of the college environment which blends "the high school experience with college to replace student failure with student success" (Olsen, 2010 p. 664). Early colleges strive to provide opportunities for college to a population experiencing barriers to access and to show students that they are college bound regardless of the barriers that they may be experiencing. Barriers such as poverty,

language acquisition, and status are meant to be overcome by the student with the support of the school.

A core principle of the national model for early colleges require the program remove the financial barrier by paying the tuition of the students as a means to support their participation in college classes (Jobs for the Future, 2009). As a result of Prop 300, payment of tuition for undocumented students would constitute a "public benefit" funded by state monies, which is illegal per the letter of the law, and therefore not allowable. If an early college wishes to continue to provide access to college courses for undocumented students, the families may be asked to pay tuition, following the challenges outlined for dual enrollment courses, or the early college must raise funds through private donations, using private scholarship funds to pay for college tuition.

In Arizona, many small charter schools have adopted this model. Located on college campuses or in close proximity to college campuses across the state, students attend college courses as part of their regular school day. Maricopa County has six schools that follow this model, in part or in whole, serving approximately 1500 students (Special Admission of Students Under 18, 2012).

**Grand Canyon Diploma**

In Arizona, the complexity of the situation increased recently with the 2010 passage of the Grand Canyon Diploma into state law. Often referred to as "Move on When Ready", the adoption of ARS 15-792 created the Grand Canyon Diploma, which provides opportunities for students to graduate high school following successful completion of tenth grade coupled with the passage of an internationally benchmarked board examination (Grand Canyon Diploma, 2010). Charter schools and districts

participate voluntarily; however the stakeholders who championed this adoption, including state legislators, business leaders, and vendors responsible for the implementation of the board examination process, hope the program positively affects eligible students and creates recognition for Arizona's educational vision.

In essence, the program provides multiple entry points to post-secondary and college level coursework, including dual enrollment or full-time enrollment in community college as well as other technical or advanced curriculum options without removing funds for those students from their school or district (Grand Canyon Diploma, 2010). While the intent of this law offers advanced students options for early high school completion, the undocumented student remains at odds with the affordability of tuition based upon Prop 300. Schools will not be able to expend funds for community college classes for undocumented students. As a result, these students may not benefit equally from the Grand Canyon Diploma. As a recently adopted program, full implementation will not occur until the 2013 school year so the tension between these conflicting statutes has yet to be fully realized or discussed. While this is an important contextual aspect to this conversation, this work focuses more thoroughly upon dual and concurrent enrollment.

## Summary

In presenting the complex nature of issues pursued by researchers, quite often the addition of diagrams and other graphic representations in the narrative simplify for the reader the concepts presented, as noted by qualitative researchers such as Stake (2010) and Corbin and Strauss (2008). To solidify the presentation of this research question and the salient issues around student experiences, I have created four graphic representations

of the concepts that inform this study. In developing an image that communicates these concepts from my perspective, I considered a set of stairs, two-sided and equal in rise and run, representing a potential progression toward increased knowledge and opportunity for all students, supported by *Plyler v. Doe* (see Figure 2).

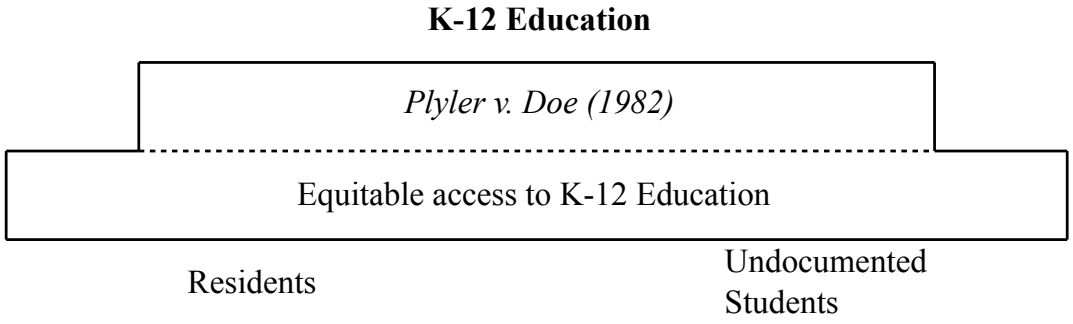


*Figure 2.* K-12 education parity for residents and undocumented students.

This idea reflects the intent of ensuring equity in the lower grade levels. Access to educational opportunities remains constant throughout primary and elementary grades. Indeed, before the passage of Proposition 300, the ability to avail oneself of accelerated learning options, thereby increasing the rigor of the high school student's studies, remained consistent for all regardless of their immigration status. *Plyler v. Doe* appeared able to maintain that equity. Both sets of students, resident and undocumented student alike, could seek accelerated learning through dual enrollment, elevating their educational experience by accessing college while in high school and taking advantage of the opportunities presented (see Figure 3).

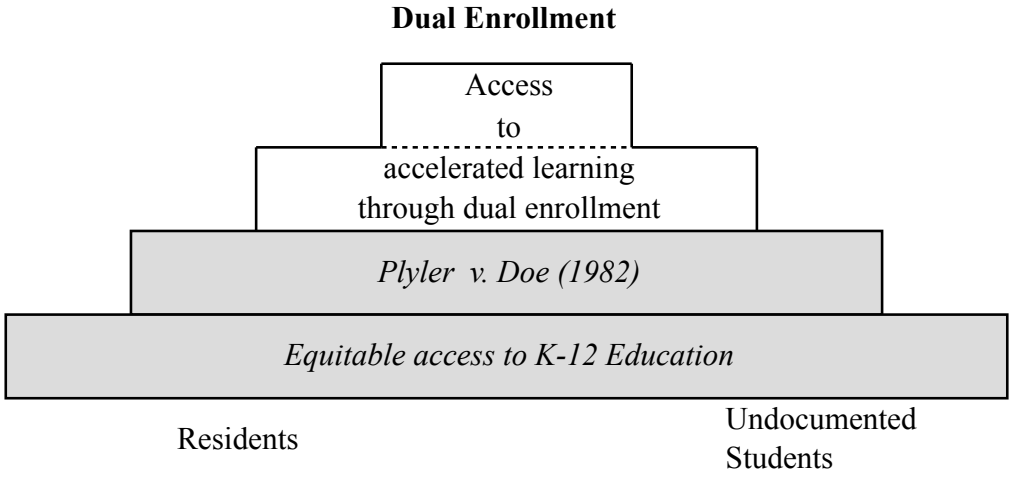


*Figure 3.* Access to college courses prior to passage of Arizona's Proposition 300.

The enactment of measures such as Proposition 300 altered the impact of *Plyler v. Doe*, creating a significant barrier to equal access through the substantial increases in tuition paid by non-resident students and by creating a separation within a student body in their ability to participate in accelerated learning options and higher levels of academics (see Figure 4). For the undocumented student, this barrier prevents full participation in dual enrollment based upon status and finances, creating two separate, unequal experiences of accelerated learning in a high school setting between resident and undocumented students.

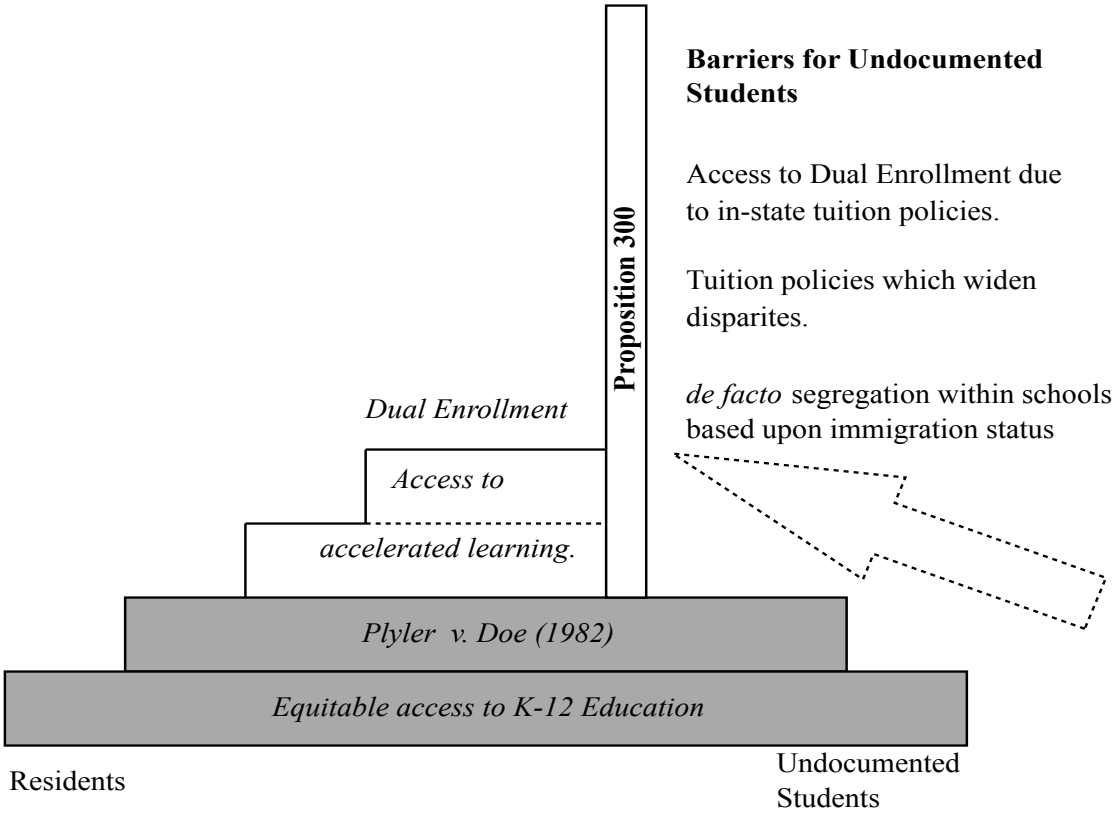


*Figure 4*. Representation of Proposition 300 as a barrier to equal access.

The final figure in this series isolates the experience of the undocumented student and reflects the question to be researched in this study related to the impact such policies have on the undocumented high school student (see Figure 5). This research hopes to aid in understanding the greater context in which such students find themselves, including their process of assimilation (classic) as developed by Gordon (1961), or segmented, as proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993), the establishment of their identity, and a renegotiation of membership and the "American Dream."

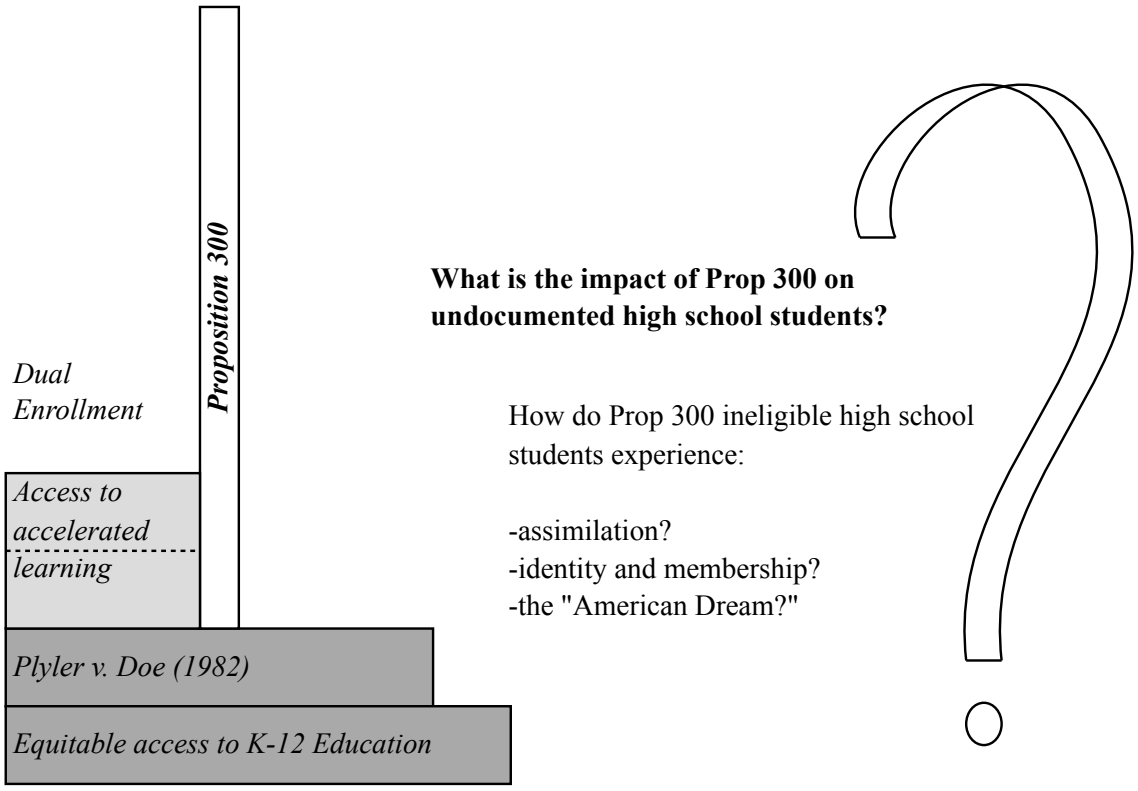


*Figure 5.* Representation of author's research question.

The concepts described in this chapter place the undocumented student in a nexus of the push and pull of membership in the American society and the potential for a downward and segmented assimilation. The context of anti-immigrant policies and the access to accelerated learning for high school students creates an environment that pushes status to the forefront of the undocumented student's high school experience. The experience of the undocumented high school student in accessing accelerated learning options, impacted by these policies, creates a duality within the educational system where students no longer have equal access to challenging courses taken in dual enrollment or through early colleges. The literature demonstrates that while discussions regarding in-

state tuition policies focus their conversation on college-aged students, the high school student who wishes to participate in advanced college studies remains hidden from view.

# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

In describing qualitative research, Stake (2010) suggests that close investigation of an issue collected from individuals and reflected through the researcher's efforts provides deep knowledge of the human experience resulting in sometimes profound insights and connections that generate new understandings. The strength of qualitative research is that it allows researchers to investigate a topic in depth, formulating a perspective and a synthesis of data by creating as thorough a narrative as possible, often leading to the presentation of new theories that aid in understanding phenomenon (Corbin et al., 2008). This methodology is well suited to this study as a means of understanding the experiences of its participants and the reality of the laws affecting their lives within the context of their lives. Focusing on this question at this time in our nation's history may provide clarity around this issue. As described in Chapter 1, the question to be explored is: What are the educational, social and emotional effects for undocumented students based upon their inability to meet the criteria set forth through Prop 300, preventing equal access to college courses taken while in high school?

To address this question, the study utilized qualitative strategies, including interviews and focus groups, to examine the impact of in-state tuition policies on undocumented high school students. The participation of students and the external players in the lives of these students, including parents, high school employees, and college staff members, provided multiple perspectives and varying access points in an effort to triangulate the results and thus add nuance to the discussion.

## Setting and Participants

Qualitative researcher Robert Stake refers to a multiple or collective case study as one that works with several cases simultaneously in order to explore and investigate a phenomenon or condition, with the goal of providing insight into the experience of a population (2008). For this study, that population is the undocumented high school student seen through their own experiences and commented upon by others around them. This research relied upon the participation of undocumented students who recently graduated from an Arizona high school, as well as parents, high school, and college staff members directly involved in the process of educating, advising, or enrolling undocumented students in dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment coursework.

### Background Information

To further understand the experience of students in this context, the study focused on undocumented students that had the ambition and drive to seek out college courses as part of their high school experience and whose ambitions intersected directly with tuition policy. In selecting participants, I sought to explore the experiences of students representing multiple graduate years, specifically 2009-2012, to evaluate whether or not there is a change over time related to personal experiences of Prop 300.

### Research Participants

When I began this study, my intention was to have representation from three distinct populations: (1) undocumented high school graduates who earned diplomas from an Arizona high school that offered dual or concurrent enrollment (subsequently referred to as "students"); (2) parents of those student participants; and (3) education professionals, such as high school employees and college employees with experiences

related to student access and Prop 300. In preparing the study, the goal I had set for participants included twelve students, four parents and four educators, anticipating two high school and two university level employees.

As the data collection began, the recruitment of the participants resulted in a shift in the study size due in part to a deadline for student participation in focus groups. November 6, 2012, Election Day, represented a potential shift in national policy, dependent upon the results of the presidential election. The reality of the changes to immigration policy, the enactment of DACA, and the political landscape meant that the students' stories and experiences had begun to change. As such, the results of the national election became a factor in these conversations because of the potential influence over future policy at all levels of government. I was interested in capturing a sense of what Prop 300 has meant to individuals, recognizing that current events and the impact of DACA in the lives of the students participating in the study, needed to be addressed.

As a result, the study participants, compared to the initial goal, evolved (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Research Participants by Goal, Recruitment Contacts and Actual Amounts*

| | | Population | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Goal | Recruitment | Actual |
| Students (Total) | 12 | 28 | 9 |
| 2008 Cohort | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| 2009 Cohort | 3 | 10 | 3 |
| 2010 Cohort | 3 | 7 | 5 |
| 2011 Cohort | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 2012 Cohort | 3 | 7 | 0 |
| Parents/Family Members | 4 | 7 | 2 |
| University Employees | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| High School Employees | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Non-profit Employees | 0 | 1 | 1 |

## Data Collection

The process of seeking out participants began with my personal knowledge of potential candidates for the study. Additionally, I received recommendations from colleagues in the education community and other individuals. In some cases, I was able to contact the referrals directly. Some colleagues offered to do so on my behalf, generally in the form of an introductory email. I also used "snowball sampling", a method long used in qualitative research to reach populations that may be difficult to recruit because of their status, experiences, or the sensitive nature of the topic of research (Biernacki &

Waldorf, 1981). One individual in particular became a significant player in the recruitment of the participants. An Arizona State University student, initially asked to serve as the Spanish language interpreter for the study, assisted with recruiting student participants, helping to establish contacts and in the arrangement of the logistics for the contact events (focus groups and interviews). His background as a student in a concurrent enrollment program in high school became an important point of contact for the study. In addition, his relationships with undocumented families in his neighborhood helped in gaining entry to parent participants. This individual's assistance enabled the recruitment of participants to move beyond my initial list of potential participants and ensured, in the case of the parent group, that there was clear communication in Spanish with those who were asked to participate in the study, further developing his role as a *de facto* research assistant (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981).

From the beginning of the study, precautions were taken to ensure the anonymity of the participants at greatest risk due to their legal status. Arizona State University's Office of Research Integrity's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study in August, 2012 (see Appendix A). IRB protocol was followed to ensure proper safeguarding of the subjects, especially those individuals participating in the study who are undocumented. The IRB granted a waiver for written consent due to the potential for harm to the participants regarding their residency status. Because of the sensitive nature of the topic, it was critical to the process that undocumented individuals participating in the study understood their responses in the collection of the data remain unidentifiable, anonymous, and untraceable. According to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) under code

§46.116 (*General requirements for informed consent*), researchers may request to waive the requirement to obtain signed consent for participants in the study (Basic HSS Policy, 2009 ). Since this research involved a population that could be at risk of deportation or other legal action if their participation connected their identity to their residency status as undocumented persons, the ability to interview individuals without fear of repercussion became critical. OHRP code §46.117 (*Documentation of informed consent*) states that an IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all subjects if it finds that the only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality (Basic HSS Policy, 2009). As a result, signatures for participants who fit that category were not collected and verbal consent was obtained as part of the interview process. Names were not used during the study.

As part of the recruitment process, I developed a script that explained to the participant the study as a whole (see Appendix B). Copies of informed consent forms, provided to the participants, described clearly the responsibility of the interviewer and the process for reporting concerns to the principal researcher or to IRB (see Appendix C). Information was provided in English and Spanish versions for the parents involved in the study.

**Student Participants**

For this study, nine undocumented Latino students agreed to participate in focus groups to discuss issues surrounding the topic. The strategy of focus groups and interviews relates directly to the qualitative methodology of the study. In interviewing those closest to the issue, the unique perspectives of the interviewees document the

realities in which they live. While the participant's year of graduation was considered as a variable in the selection process, the intention of the study was to seek students who represented different depths of experience with Prop 300 throughout their high school careers. My intent in interviewing graduates from cohorts 2009-2012 would enable the research to address the relevance of potential confounding issues such as post-secondary life and self-determination upon graduating from high school. In recruiting participants, a pair of siblings participated in a focus group; however one of the siblings graduated in 2008. Her participation provided a unique perspective as a graduate and as a family member; however her responses focused on her own experiences as a student. In total, four separate focus groups were convened, with two or three participants in each group, spanning cohort graduation years from 2008-2011. Recruitment efforts in scheduling 2012 graduates were unsuccessful. While there were verbal commitments from at least one 2012 cohort member, they were unable to commit to participating and were sporadic in their communications.

The issues surrounding undocumented immigrants whose future may depend upon anonymity made the selection of participants for this study more complicated. As a result, this purposive, criterion referenced sample allowed for the identification of the student participants through my personal relationships with former students unaffiliated with and no longer associated with the school or community college district in which I work. As a long-time educator in a secondary school setting, I have contact with students that fit the criteria and invited students to participate in the study. Additional participants were gained through the contact of the university student interpreter as well as snowball sampling as noted earlier. In addition, I reached out to active DREAM Act clubs on

ASU's campus, including Students United for Fair Rights & Greater Equality (SUFFRAGE) and met with ASU employees in the School of Transborder Studies for additional referrals. Students recruited for the study were not currently enrolled in any colleges or universities, including Maricopa Community Colleges, Arizona State University, or private institutions such as Grand Canyon University.

The students attended and/or graduated from a variety of high schools, including small charter schools in urban settings, a small rural high school, and a large comprehensive public high school. Student participants selected for the study qualified for participation in college courses while enrolled in high school, based upon their participation in college outreach programs, their grades, or their ability to take college courses before the passage of Prop 300. The focus groups were conducted in order to facilitate a conversation about the varied experiences of the participants.

**Parent Participants**

In addition to interviewing the students, I sought to conduct interviews with the students' parents, which required the use of an interpreter as most of the parents are either monolingual Spanish speaking or are more comfortable and have greater fluency and nuance in communication while speaking Spanish. While recruitment of student participants was challenging, the recruitment of parents was more difficult due to the language barrier between the researcher and the parent. I am unable to speak Spanish fluently, therefore the addition of the interpreter was necessary in order to effectively recruit participants and assist in conducting interviews, avoiding the use of a family member as the primary interpreter. The process created a distance between myself and the participant, hopefully minimized through the work of the interpreter. His efforts to

recruit resulted in a small sample of parents. The comfort level of the family member speaking through a third party may have served to chill responses to requests by the interpreter. While parental involvement was voluntary, made anonymous and required a minimal time commitment in order to avoid any negative impact to their work or home responsibilities, there was little interest in participation. The interpreter reported some skepticism among the individuals he contacted regarding the study. Concerns for anonymity and fear regarding the current climate in Arizona surrounding undocumented people in general, chilled responses to participation.

Following the established protocols for verbal rather than written consent, participants were given the opportunity to review consent forms, written in Spanish, and to ask questions regarding the information. Parents provided verbal consent at the beginning of the audio recording and were interviewed in one session each, with the help of the interpreter. Interviews occurred in the homes of the participants. The parent participants were the mothers of Student 3 and Student 7.

**High School/University Employees**

To provide additional perspectives on the undocumented student experience, high school and college employees were asked to participate in this study. The addition of high school and university employees add to the study a different perspective and understanding of the experience of this student population. This group represented both secondary level employees and higher education employees who work directly with students and have experience with this issue. The high school staff members have witnessed the impact of Prop 300 directly in their work with undocumented high school students. Specifically, these individuals have the experience of working with dual or

concurrent enrollment programs. Recruitment of the high school employees included counselors working with dual enrollment programs in large comprehensive high schools in urban settings.[2] The participants were samples of convenience as they are professionals known to me through my prior work as a high school counselor and through my volunteer connections outside of work.

The university employee interviewed is an individual I connected with through the recommendation of an employee in ASU's School of Transborder Studies. My knowledge of the ASU program began when I attended an event entitled "Undocumented and Unafraid", which recounted the work of DREAM Act students and their experiences at University of California, Los Angeles (Wong et al., 2012) recently captured in a new book of essays. The organizer of the event suggested the person I interviewed as someone who has been involved in these issues since the passage of Prop 300 and has served the DREAMer community in varying capacities over the years.

The addition of an agency representative offered the unique perspective of a person working in the community to help students with college access. I have been aware of this organization since 2006, before the passage of Prop 300, as an agency whose mission is to promote college success among Latino students, although their outreach has grown beyond the Latino community. When the opportunity to interview the Founder/CEO of this organization presented itself, I felt this provided the unique perspective of an advocate working from outside the educational system, bridging the gap between K-12 and college access for hundreds of students since its inception.

[2] School #1 had a student population of 1879. School #2 had a student population of 1417.

**Instruments Used in Data Collection**

Three sets of protocols, modeled after Creswell's design (2009), were developed as instruments used to conduct focus groups and interviews. The protocol specifies components to streamline data collection and includes copies of questions, space for recording responses and the use of recording devices (see Appendix D). Interview questions provide a guideline for the conversations; however; the nature of semi-structured interviews allows follow-up questions, relying upon the flow the conversation to generate meaningful discussion. The interview/focus group questions were piloted with individuals not participating in the study. The questions developed fell into several constructs, varying from group to group as listed below.

**Students.** For student participants, I divided the focus group protocol into five constructs:

1. Building Rapport (questions 1-3)
2. Establishing Race, Identity and Culture (questions 4-7)
3. Education, Prop 300, DREAM Act (questions 8-17)
4. Future Orientation (questions 18-19)
5. Debrief/Closing (question 20)

The questions were developed in order to provide a progression of thought, establishing background information, experiences with the issues at hand and providing opportunities to discuss aspirations for the future. I piloted the formal questions with students outside of the study on September 14, 2012 in order to gauge how a student may respond in an interview setting, making minor adjustments to phrasing to eliminate redundancy as much as possible. Interviews were semi-structured, allowing for follow-

up conversations based upon participant responses. Based upon the feedback from the pilot, the initial student questions are listed in Appendix E.

**Parents.** For the parent interviews, I also divided the interview questions into five constructs:

1. Building Rapport (questions 1-2)
2. Family History (question 3)
3. Education, Prop 300, DREAM Act (questions 4-7)
4. Future Orientation (question 8)
5. Debrief/Closing (question 9)

Similar to the focus groups, parent interviews were semi-structured, allowing follow-up questions to be asked if warranted. I sought assistance in translating the interview questions into Spanish as part of the instrument development and during the interview, the interpreter assisted in offering clarification as needed. The formal questions used were piloted on October 31, 2012 with a bilingual parent outside of the study in order to gauge responses and accuracy of translations in an interview setting (see Appendix F).

**Employees.** For the employee interviews, I divided the questions into four constructs, including the following:

1. Building Rapport (question 1)
2. Work with Students, Prop 300 (questions 2-7)
3. Membership (question 6)
4. Future (question 5, 7 -8)

Once again, the interviews were semi-structured to allow for greater conversation and other insights into the issue captured organically as a part of the process. The formal

questions used were piloted with a high school counselor outside of the study on September 9, 2012 in order to gauge the efficacy of the questions and to determine how an employee may respond in an interview setting. Changes to initial questioning resulted in shifts in order for second level questions and minor changes to word choice (see Appendix G).

## Procedures Used

Specific steps used in data collection ensured continuity in process for each session, with some minor variation among the categories of groups.

### Step 1: Conducting Interviews

**Focus groups**. The student focus groups were conducted on the campus of Arizona State University or in a similarly private and quiet setting such as a public library. Focus groups, arranged by graduation cohort, included two to three participants representing high school graduates from 2008-2011. Four focus groups were conducted from October 1, 2012-November 6, 2012, arranged by cohort (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Student Focus Groups by Cohort and Participant*

| | Graduation Cohort | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 |
| Focus Group #1 | - | 3 | - | - |
| Focus Group #2 | - | - | 2 | - |
| Focus Group #3 | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Focus Group #4 | - | 2 | - | - |

Audio was recorded digitally and labeled with participant pseudonyms that preserved the participants' anonymity but allowed the investigator to distinguish individuals in the study (e.g. Student 1, Student 2, etc.).

**Parent interviews**. I interviewed parents in their homes in an effort to minimize the tension that may exist in the discussion of a sensitive topic. The interpreter supported the interviewer and participant by switching back and forth between Spanish and English as needed. In addition, I took notes during the conversation, documenting physical and verbal cues in the parents' responses that may not be apparent in a written transcribed response. As with the student interviews, the audio was recorded digitally and labeled in a way that preserved the participants' anonymity but allowed the investigator to distinguish individuals in the study and their relationship to the student.

**Employee interviews**. Interviews related to employees or community members occurred face-to-face at a quiet location of their choosing. Three interviews occurred in the offices of the participant and one occurred at ASU West in a study room. Similar to the parent interviews, notes were combined with observations made during the discussion to capture non-verbal aspects of the conversation. I labeled employee interviews in part by identifying their occupation (e.g. counselor, CEO, etc.)

**Data collection procedures.**

1. Arrival/Introductions: Upon arriving at the designated interview site and following informal introductions, I presented the participants with the consent information. I then gave the participants time to review the information and to discuss any items that needed clarification. Next, I described the procedure for recording the interview, reminding participants that names should not be

used during the conversation. Because the employee consent was written, signed copies were collected and duplicates offered to the participants.

2. Recording: I recorded each focus group/interview using an iPhone with an external TASCAM microphone attached. TASCAM utilizes a proprietary application for capturing audio, called *PCMRecorder*. The use of the microphone ensured better quality recordings, while its small footprint allowed for a less obtrusive method of gathering audio. The application allowed for the manipulation of sound levels, enabling adjustments to sensitivity due to the surroundings or equalization to cut low or high-end frequencies. In addition to digitally recording the interview, notes were taken by hand to ensure the interviewer's initial thoughts on important pieces of information were captured in the moment.
3. Verbal Consent (students and parents only): With the digital audio recording software running, the interview or focus group began. When working with students and parents, I read the following statement and asked for verbal consent to participate:

   "You are being asked to participate in this study to help better understand the experiences of students who sought to enroll in college courses but many have had issues related to tuition rates.

   *(Students)* As a former high school student, you have been asked to participate in a focus group, about your experiences with college classes related to Prop 300 while you were in high school.

*(Parent)* As a parent, you are being interviewed regarding your son or daughter's experiences when they were in high school and how their immigration status affected their experience overall.

The interviews are being recorded and notes may be taken during our conversation. After the interviews are done, the recording will be transcribed, word for word. After the study is done, the recordings and copies will be deleted. In order to protect your identity, names will not be used during the interviews, nor will they be used in any written form.

Do you have any questions?

*(Respond as needed for clarification)*

Do you agree to participate in the study to participate under the conditions I have described to you?

*(Wait for Response)*

Thank you.

*(Begin interview/focus group)"*

4. Questions: After the consent had been verbalized, I began conducting the focus group/interview using protocol described previously. The student focus groups ranged in time from seventy-five minutes to ninety minutes. Parent interviews were closer to thirty minutes in length (twenty-four and thirty-three minutes each), while employee interviews ranged from twenty-three minutes to fifty-eight minutes in length.
5. Post-interview: When the sessions were finished being recorded, the audio files were treated with the following procedure:

*a.* Audio files (.wav) were transferred to a laptop from the iPhone, password protected and deleted from the iPhone following the digital transfer.

*b.* Files were copied into an MP3 file format and uploaded to a secure file in a password protected, private "Dropbox" account.

*c.* Because of the time limitations of this study, I made the decision to utilize a transcription service, Landmark Associates (*thelai.com*), to transcribe the recordings. Landmark offers secure uploads and downloads and completed the transcripts within seven days.

*d.* When I received the transcripts in a document format (.doc) from Landmark Associates, I reviewed the transcripts while listening to the recordings, correcting errors in the transcription, storing the final document on the same secure "Dropbox" account.

6. Audio and word document files will be securely deleted upon completion of the study.

**Step 2: Data Analysis**

The qualitative methods outlined in this chapter rely upon *grounded theory* as its means of analysis. As a tool of analysis, this theory provides a researcher the opportunity to investigate phenomena in the moment, telling a story completely, within its historical and immediate contexts (Charmaz, 2008). Following the data collection phase of the study, I began my process of coding and evaluating the data, seeking emergent themes following Corbin and Strauss' (2008) methodology for analyzing concepts. I began the process of coding by construct, "relating minor concepts to broader level concepts"

(Corbin, et al., 2008 p. 193). Shortly following each interview, the analysis of the data began, consisting of accessing the information holistically; listening to and reading through focus groups and interviews, while identifying broad themes and concepts before repeated readings where specific pieces of raw data could be transcribed as emergent concepts.

The grounded theory process of "open" or "axial" coding best describes the method used in this analysis. Defined by Corbin and Strauss (2008), open coding involves "breaking data apart and delineating concepts to stand for blocks of raw data" (p.195). Using Microsoft Excel, I created spreadsheets for each group (students, parents, and employees), deconstructing the recordings as I listened and read along with the transcript. Using Excel allowed me to create multiple worksheets representing varying layers of the coding process. Initially, I created columns representing each participant with rows delineating each question within each construct to facilitate taking notes on each response by participant (see example, Figure 6).

| CONSTRUCT (e.g. Establishing Race, Identity and Culture) | Questions | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 7 In you opinion, what does it mean to be an "American"? | | | |
| | 7a Do you view yourself as American? | | | |

*Figure 6*: Coding template.

The coding developed in the following sequence in order to synthesize the data for subsequent evaluation and discussion. Each step represents a deeper layer of evaluation:

1. The cells contained a paraphrase of the responses to each question as well as key words or phrases spoken by the participants.
2. From the information contained in the first round of coding, I began to develop a list of themes emerging from each question and construct, pulling out key words and phrases in an effort to generate a specific list of codes for each construct.
3. My next step included looking at the results shown in the first level, informed by the second level, to create a worksheet that pulled out quotations from each question that were representative of the emerging concepts and themes. The quotations provide specific language to support themes as they develop further.
4. Next, I identified the main idea of each phrase from level 2 by person and by question, creating an aggregation of responses by question and the representation of the voices included in the study.
5. Using the information from level 4, I began to finalize key themes by construct in an effort to define the top layer of data, in order to develop my interpretation of the results. (Creswell, 2009)

To assist in the understanding of the process involved in the analysis of the data, I have created a diagram that represents the process of coding and analyzing the results of this study (see Figure 7).

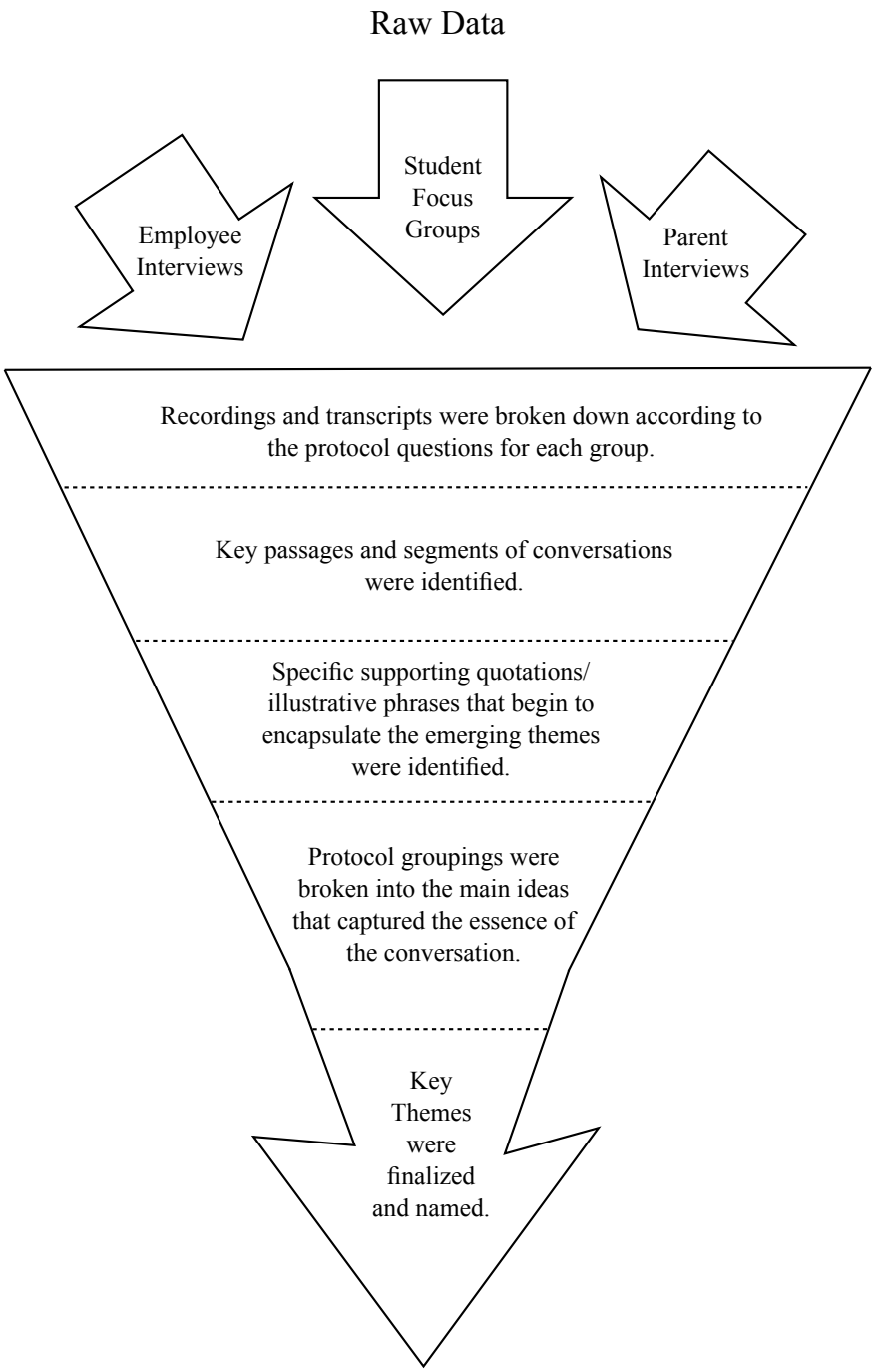


*Figure 7*. Graphic representation of analysis process.

The funnel shape presents, visually, the open coding process described earlier: taking the large amount of data, sifting through the hours of audio and the accompanying transcriptions in order to aggregate the key themes. As the process continued, the themes presented themselves more overtly. The details of the analysis of the data, and the emergence of the final themes is described further in Chapter 4.

Additionally, as I coded data I began to capture my preliminary ideas in memos connected to the themes and concepts as they begin to emerge. Recognizing that as the researcher in a qualitative study I am a part of the process and a factor in the analysis, the narrative I developed reflects that recognition of the relationship of researcher to the data, as presented in Chapter 5.

## Validity

Qualitative researchers rely upon their relationships to the study participants, to the data and to the reader (Miller & Crabtree, 2008). This frames the conversation regarding the concept of validity in such studies. According to Creswell (2009), validity for the qualitative researcher is a process of checking for accuracy. Creswell describes several approaches to establishing validity in qualitative studies, including triangulation, clarifying bias, peer debriefing and the use of external auditors.

### Triangulation

As described by Stake (2008), triangulation helps establish validity by "using multiple perspectives to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (p. 133). For this study, the inclusion of three distinct voices, including students, parents, and employees, connected similar topics of discussion and provided multiple perspectives on several key constructs. Additionally, the interview and focus

group protocols were informed, in part, by the literature review. This offers justification for the development of themes as they relate to each topic presented.

### Clarifying Bias

Described in Chapters 1, 4 and 5, my connection to the topic is noted and discussed overtly as part of the research process. Comments and interpretations are described through the lens of my experiences with the topic as well as my interactions with the population participating in the study.

### Peer Debriefing

As suggested by Creswell (2009), peer debriefing is used to "enhance the accuracy of the account…so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher" (p. 192). For this study, I have been able to engage on a regular basis with several peer researchers and other individuals to discuss data collection and results, giving me the opportunity to have a sounding board for ideas and to discuss themes and interpretations as they evolved.

### External Auditors

As this study is the culmination of a doctoral degree, the presence of external auditors occurs as a function of the academic process. The opportunity to hear the perspectives of professionals in the field provides oversight regarding the collection and analysis of the data. Regular conversations with the committee chair enhanced my understanding of qualitative analysis and procedures for data collection.

## Reliability

The inclusion of the steps taken in collecting and analyzing data helps establish the reliability of the study (Creswell, 2009). The approach described in this study are

consistent with *grounded theory* and as described can be reproduced using another sample of participants. In addition to the processes of gathering data, this study included accuracy checks in transcriptions and ongoing comparisons of codes as the evaluation of the data progressed.

## Summary

Chapter 3 presented an overview of the methods incorporated in conducting this qualitative study. Briefly restated, the study asked high school graduates to participate in focus groups in order to discuss their experiences as undocumented students who sought access to college courses while they were in high school. Parents of some of the participants were interviewed to provide their insights about their child's experiences. To add context to the discussion, employees from high schools, university, and non-profit agencies were interviewed to discover how they have seen this policy affect individuals. This chapter described the process of recruitment, data collection, and data analysis. The next chapter will focus on the results of the study obtained through the methods described in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As noted in Chapter 1, this study investigates how Arizona's Proposition 300 directly affects undocumented high school students. Passed into law in 2006 through the voter initiative process, Proposition 300 denies public benefits to individuals that cannot provide proof of residency. As a result, undocumented students who attend college are ineligible for in-state tuition, considered a public benefit. The relevance of this policy linked to high school students comes into play when an undocumented student attempts to take college courses through programs designed to accelerate learning through college coursework, such as dual enrollment. This qualitative investigation focused on the following question: What are the educational, social, and emotional effects for undocumented students based upon their inability to meet the criteria set forth through Prop 300, preventing equal access to college courses taken while in high school?

Chapter 3 presented the methods used to obtain subjects for this study, the processes used in interviewing and conducting focus groups and an overview of the procedures used for data analysis. This chapter focuses on the results of the study. The results, presented by the interview protocols established for the student, parent, and employee participants, are disaggregated by the themes that emerged through the analysis process.

Each participant group had interview protocols that guided the questioning and subsequently organized the data analysis. While similar in some areas, a shift in focus became necessary dependent upon the role of the participant related to the issues explored (see Figure 8).

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student** | Building Rapport | Establishing Race, Identity and Culture | Education, Proposition 300 and the DREAM Act | Future Orientation | Debrief/Closing |
| **Parent** | Building Rapport | Family History | Education and Proposition 300 | Future Orientation | Debrief/Closing |
| **Employee** | Building Rapport | Work with Students, Proposition 300 | Membership | Future | Debrief/Closing |

*Figure 8.* Interview protocol guide by participant group.

The analysis of the data identified several themes in each protocol, discussed in further detail in the sections that follow (see Figure 9).

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student** | **Building Rapport** | **Establishing Race, Identity and Culture** | **Education, Proposition 300 and the DREAM Act** | **Future Orientation** | **Debrief/ Closing** |
| | Childhood Arrivals | Bicultural Identity | Education as a Key to Success | Goal Attainment | Stay Focused and Do Not Give Up |
| | Family Relocation | Connection to Community | Proposition 300: Impact | Accessing the American Dream | |
| | Transition to High School | Defining the American Dream | DREAMer's Message to Policymakers | | |
| | | | Deferred Action as Hope | | |
| | | | | | |
| **Parent** | **Building Rapport** | **Family History** | **Education and Proposition 300** | **Future Orientation** | **Debrief/ Closing** |
| | Their Child is Motivated to Succeed | Emigrated for a Better Future, however life has been a struggle | Proposition 300 prevents their child from attending college | Children should work hard to be successful | Parents have a responsibility to help their children succeed |
| | | | "Anti-immigration" laws hurt "good people" | | |
| | | | | | |
| **Employee** | **Building Rapport** | **Work with Students, Proposition 300** | **Membership** | **Future** | **Debrief/ Closing** |
| | Helping youth transition to college | Education is the key to success, despite the barriers created by Prop 300 | Freedom of self-determination | Proposition 300 influences at the micro and macro level | Immigration reform is necessary to provide equal access for students |
| | | Deferred Action changes the conversation | Meaningful contributions to society | | |
| | | | | | |

*Figure 9.* Key themes by participant group and interview protocol.

## Results - Student Focus Groups

As indicated in Table 8, the frameworks for data collection of the student interview protocols were divided into five separate areas. As a reminder to the reader, the protocols and themes for the student group are illustrated in Figure 10.

| Building Rapport | Establishing Race, Identity and Culture | Education, Proposition 300 and the DREAM Act | Future Orientation | Debrief/ Closing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Childhood Arrivals* | *Bicultural Identity* | *Education as a Key to Success* | *Goal Attainment* | *Stay Focused and Do Not Give Up* |
| *Family Relocation* | *Connection to Community* | *Proposition 300: Impact* | *Accessing the American Dream* | |
| *Transition to High School* | *Defining the American Dream* | *DREAMer's Message to Policymakers* | | |
| | | *Deferred Action as Hope* | | |

*Figure 10.* Student group: Interview protocol and key themes.

### Building Rapport

The first protocol included several low-risk questions in an effort to ease the transition to more challenging conversations. With this protocol, I attempted to begin understanding the background of the participants through general information such as the type of high school program they had attended. The analysis generated three themes: Childhood Arrivals, Family Relocation and School Choice.

**Childhood arrivals.** All of the participants arrived to the United States from Mexico as children, reporting arrival ages ranging from 3 months old to 10 years old. Within the student participant population of nine (*N*=9), six individuals arrived between the ages of 3 months and 4 years old. The remaining three participants arrived between the ages of 5 and 10 years old. For those who arrived before age 4, the transition to school occurred at age appropriate stages, with six of the nine participants' education occurring exclusively in the United States, specifically Arizona public schools. For those who arrived after age 5, their schooling began in Mexico and continued in the United States.

One participant noted that having lived here all her life, this country was all she knew. Another participant summed up the typical experience of the group and of many childhood arrivals:

> I was brought here when I was three months and I've been here since. I have never went back to Mexico. I started school when I was three years old. I went to Head Start. Then I went to—I got promoted from eighth grade to high school and I graduated. Well now I'm just waiting for something to happen so I can continue to do what I wanna do. (Student 2)

Throughout the conversations, the journey from elementary to middle school to high school and beyond followed traditional trajectories of educational attainment. Language acquisition and the transition to American schools became a challenge for those who arrived as older children:

> I had to learn the language and everything, so that was a big culture shock for me, switching from one country to another. It was real difficult, at first, trying to get used to the school system and everything. It took me a while to get used to everything, especially with the language, as well. (Student 4)

**Family relocation.** Related to the issue of being a childhood arrival, the reasons given by the participants for their families to immigrate to the United States emerged as a theme. Economic need and the hope for a safer place to raise a family appeared to be the motivation families had for leaving their home country, which, for all participants, was Mexico. For most of the families, the opportunities in Mexico were limited and the desire to provide a better future for their family became an important factor in the decision to move. This family decision impacts their choices as they move forward in their lives: "I've been working hard so I can have a better future, 'cuz I have -- that was the whole point of my mom bringing me over here, to have a better future than I would over there" (Student 5). One participant commented that "as long as there's poverty in other countries, people are gonna seek and look for ways to come to America, to the greatest country in the world. That's what my family decided to do" (Student 7).

Typically, relocation followed a pattern where one parent, generally the father, immigrates first and the rest of the family follows later. Often, this created significant periods of separation from a parent and resulted in prolonged stays with extended family members, especially for those who arrived as older children. Student 5 lived with his grandmother for four years, while Student 4 stayed with his grandmother for two years. As families reunified, they settled in and struggled to work hard to build their lives in the community. This description from one participant mirrors the experience of the others in the study:

> We lived in a mobile home so it was just six kids and us three plus my mom and dad and those parents. Really bad living conditions...eventually we moved out. I mean we still live in the same place; like something similar to that but we're alone. We're kind of well-off, and we pitch in; she and I. Yeah, so we're kinda stable but we're just struggling. (Student 1)

Each participant commented on his or her family's economic struggles, but the point made consistently is that there remains greater opportunity in the United States as well as the potential to improve their situation.

**Transition to high school.** For most of the participants engaged in this study, the choice of high schools reflected their ambitions for attending college. Of the students in the focus groups, eight attended schools that could assist with earning college credits through various programs of dual or concurrent enrollment. One attended a small, rural high school where the choices for college access were limited. While each student had access to college courses, their ability to benefit from the options varied.

Discussions about high schools included a level of awareness at a time in their lives when making decisions about school choice does not always rely upon academic factors. Eight of the participants attended college preparatory programs in small schools that offered access to college, and did so intending to take full advantage of those opportunities: "The whole purpose of me attending that high school was to get ahead with college" (Student 6). However, there was recognition in their discussion of the need for support and an environment that provided personal attention and focused on learning. Some descriptions of their schools included the following:

- "I love to learn and I love it when it's a small group in a class, not like a big old classroom full of kids, cuz they tend to focus more on you." (Student 2)
- "It was a small school. I think it was better for me because I tend to not concentrate." (Student 3)
- "Safe, welcoming. Everybody knew each other. Everybody was helpful. They just simply looked out for us in every single way, shape, and form. The

teachers did their job by insuring us to go back to school and then to simply keep focused." (Student 7)

In recognizing the importance now of their choice in schools, participants appreciated the opportunities to participate in accelerated learning options; however their ability to benefit from those programs varied widely, discussed in more detail related to Proposition 300.

**Establishing Race, Identity and Culture**

This protocol elevated the conversation to reflect on the issues of identity for the student participants. The questions asked participants to describe their personalities, cultural identities, and experiences of living in Arizona as an undocumented person, reflecting on the idea of being American and their experience of the American Dream. Within this protocol emerged three themes: Bicultural Identity, Connection to Community, and the American Dream.

**Bicultural identity.** For each of the participants, their identity blends the cultures of their heritage, Mexican, with their self-concept as Americans. Their cultural identity merges these two cultures through the celebrations of holidays, adherence to the laws of the land, and their participation in the institutions of their community: "Well, I could say that I have a little bit of both, so I'd be like Mexican-American, that's what they call it, because I've learned all of the traditions from here...I like it, it's nice" (Student 5). Student 1's description typifies the general response of the others: "I'm Mexican but I would consider myself Mexican American because even though my—I don't have a social security or my birth certificate doesn't say that, I do consider myself American."

Her sibling expressed a different perspective related to status, with some frustration evident in the response:

> I acknowledge I'm Mexican, I love being Mexican, I love all the Mexican traditions we have. Honestly, since the fact that we've lived here our whole lives we really don't know a lot about—and it disappoints me - that I don't know a lot about my roots. I wish I did. I wish I knew all the holidays and how we celebrate it … I love living here. I consider myself American, you know? Because I've lived here my whole life and I've been here longer than my siblings. It's just like I don't know what I have to—do I have to have a sign that says I'm undocumented or something? What does undocumented look like? I mean I'm Mexican but I would consider myself Mexican American because even though my—I don't have a social security or my birth certificate doesn't say that I do consider myself American. (Student 9)

In this statement, the participant connected cultural and ethnic identity to the broader issues of immigrant policy and its impact upon the connection to the community as a whole.

**Connection to community.** As conversations centering on identity advanced, the identification of self as "American" reflected a desire to give back to the community as a whole:

- "I believe giving back to the community, that defines an American." (Student 4)
- "It's just doing the right things, trying to help each other out, doing as much thing as you can to better your state, better your country." (Student 5)
- "…a positive citizen that follows the rules and doesn't complain about things. I don't know, does it out of the love for the place that they live in, that they were raised in or born in." (Student 9)

- "I seriously just have love for this country and I just feel like I could give something back… Being able to be legal here and give back legally." (Student 1)

This identity was often described as incongruent with their personal knowledge of current anti-immigrant sentiments, fear of discovery, and deportation:

> We can't get a job here, we can't create jobs here, we can't help other people here so what's the use? We're gonna try to do that cuz we're hard working people and we need to make money and things like that. You just kinda—you're always a step behind." (Student 2)

Life in Arizona proves to have additional frustration related to identity: "I don't know why being Mexican is a crime. I believe that everybody should have the opportunity to have a dream" (Student 3). The frustration over the environment in Arizona appeared ill conceived to Student 7:

> The other thing that affects me and my people is all these anti-immigration laws....You're trying to scare people out. You're trying to deport the state of Arizona back to Mexico. At the same time, in the long run, they're jeopardizing their situation—I don't wanna say their job but at the same time they're putting themselves in a different hole.

The sentiments expressed included being part of a community in order to give back through various means, including taxation, volunteerism. and personal achievement. For these students, their status sets them apart from their peers and generates an awareness of their differences at varying developmental stages. The consensus among the participants was that the issues surrounding their status became more difficult to navigate as they grew older and were exposed to more obstacles in achieving the American Dream.

**Defining the "American Dream".** Understanding the American Dream reflects a desire for self-determination and the ability to live life happily. All participants expressed hope for the future that involved full social and economic participation:

- "Having a job, being able to support your family, being able to provide a better future for your kids, having something in the future."(Student 3)
- "Well, for me, American dream is making a better future for myself, supporting my family, being able to have a good education, have a good job, and just live a normal life, yeah, without being afraid of getting deported." (Student 5)

One participant went so far as to describe the image in detail. Her description underscores the pervasiveness of the phrase to an American identity:

> When I think about the American dream, well, when I was little I used to look at pictures of random things like newspapers or something like that. I saw a picture of a wife with her high heels, and her pretty dress, and her husband all suited up, and her kids. They were all happy....Yeah, well, when I saw there, I can say it's kind of living the American dream, not 'cause of how they were dressed or anything, but because they were happy. That's what I saw. They looked like they weren't struggling economic-wise. They weren't sad. They were having a good time. It was the time of their lives. They had everything they wanted and they looked like they had everything they wanted. Yeah, that's how I pictured right now. I do picture them, like they look like a successful family but, for me, the American dream is being happy and debt free. (Student 8)

Of note, the issue of taxes and access to driver's licenses were raised by several individuals. Over the course of the conversation it evolved as a "rite of passage" as part of a greater connection to what it "means" to be American: "I know it's not important to drive and everything, but it's just a part of being an American, having your freedom" (Student 3). As she discussed her desire to pay taxes legally, Student 1 expressed her thoughts with some emotion:

> …that's the American Dream for me. Being able to be legal here and give back legally …It just feels like you could actually give something back. To me that's like—that's a big thing for me. I mean I feel like I'm being responsible because I can have—I have the opportunity to not pay them since I pretty much don't exist here. I just feel like that's me belonging. You got tears out of taxes.

The phrase also contained some negative aspects for some participants. The inability to fully access the rights of citizenship as undocumented persons weighs heavily on some of the participants, who describe losing the definition over time as the reality of life creeps in:

> We're settling for something way less than the American Dream that we planned or thought we were gonna have. It's just you're settling for this mediocre not-dream. It's like a nap…I don't wanna settle. I wanna reach that, you know? Not have it be that vague image, dream thing. (Student 9)

**Education, Proposition 300 and the DREAM Act**

Four distinct themes emerged in the analysis of this protocol. The conversation focused on Prop 300 primarily, however the discussion turned to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) several times. As such, the four themes emerged in the analysis, including the following: education as a key to success, Prop 300 as a limiting factor in high school and at present, the need to improve understanding of the motivation of DREAMers to those who make policy, and finally, DACA providing a cautious hope for the future.

**Education as a key to success.** All of the participants in this study commented on the need to continue their education in order to be successful in life. Their goals often included multiple degrees, ranging from Associate's to Masters degrees. Of this group, two students had completed an Associate's degree as part of their high school experience, taking advantage of scholarships to pay for college courses while in high school as well

as participating in college programs that funded educational opportunities. For some, the inability to take college courses in high school or to reduce the number of courses because of tuition, results in what one individual described as an "incomplete education."

The participants in this study all represent the first generation of their families to attend college. As such, their parent's experiences with education were limited, however, their influence over their path remains critical. Student 9's statement about her parent's influence summarizes the sentiment of the other participants: ""I feel like I don't wanna disappoint them...Education's probably the biggest priority in our family."

There is also recognition that for some of their peers--siblings, friends, etc.-- the dream of a college education is not always a priority. Several participants described individuals they know who do not accept that having a degree is a path to success. For some, underachievement is a source of frustration within their family, especially if the sibling is a citizen. Student 2 comments on her frustrations with her brother's situation: "I always tell him like oh, why did you have to have papers? [Laughter] Give me the papers. Like, I'll use them. I'll go to school, you know? I'll do something with my life." The barriers placed in front of these individuals become clearer as they discuss Proposition 300.

**Proposition 300: Impact.** The participants in the study recognized the impact of Prop 300 in both their high school and post-secondary lives as a barrier to accessing college courses. For some, the graduation cohort they belong to saw the adoption of Prop 300 during their high school career. This had a chilling effect on their access to college courses as the ability to pay for the courses became either illegal for the school they

attended or the program they participated in, or was financially out of reach due to the increases in tuition.

For many, Prop 300 became a benchmark moment in their lives where the realization of the challenges of being undocumented intersected with their lives in a significant way. In describing the inequities felt by the participants, they shared how it felt for them:

- "For me, it was just an obstacle. Like I say, every obstacle has a solution. It was just like okay, we're gonna be able to solve that either way...but it also hurt more when you saw other people that were in the same situation." (Student 8)
- "I was capable of taking college classes and I was smart enough... I was angry at—because I couldn't take any college classes... I also noticed that Prop 300 when it passed, it affected me throughout the whole high school year because when I graduated everybody graduated with a bunch of college credits and I didn't." (Student 3)
- "I felt left out. I felt like - I'm trying hard, too, and I'm getting good grades and I do my work. I go to school. I go to school every day. Why can't I get it? What's wrong with me? No, I thought it was something wrong." (Student 2)

Students that were eligible for college courses from 2007-2010 report less difficulty paying for tuition; however the students that attempted to enroll after the community college district substantially increased the fees in 2011 saw a greater impact over time.

This increase affected those who graduated as well and attempted to take classes after high school. Much of the realization of the impact came for those individuals when the financial responsibility of paying for classes fell on them: "Once you're out it's just like you have nothing to do, nowhere to go, nowhere to work. You can't go to school….It's just like your whole day is consumed by work; you can't do anything else" (Student 1). Illustrative of that point, none of the participants are currently enrolled in college courses, nor have the means to continue with coursework at this time. "Things only got worse with tuition rates. I mean, at first, I was able to take two classes for a semester after I graduated high school. I mean, at the moment, I'm not able to even take one 'cuz of tuition rates" (Student 4). As a group, the frustration over the limitations placed upon them related to access is recognized with a sense of recognition that this obstacle prevents them from achieving their educational goals.

**DREAMers message to policymakers.** As the conversation turned to public policy, a summation of their recommendation to leaders included consideration of the contributions they as individuals can make in the short and long term for the country as a whole. There is a sense among the participants that emerging from the shadow economy would contribute to increased tax revenues, improve the local economies of their communities, and provide a means of elevating their work commensurate to their educational level. Student 9 expresses the level of frustration indicative of most responses to this theme. "I can benefit this country if they give me the chance. Let me go to school and later on I'll help you out or I'll pay taxes and all. I'll send my kids to school too. I'll have them in the army, I don't know. I don't know what would satisfy them" (Student 9).

The study took place in the fall of 2012, before the national elections occurred. In that context, there was some feeling that if President Obama was not reelected, any subsequent changes to DACA brought about by a Republican administration would not affect their lives significantly as their predictions were that policies would not change: "even if Obama does win he really hasn't done much for us either in the past" (Student 9). The reality of their lives is that they are present without documentation and that the system is broken and has to be fixed. The feeling of being "stuck" from a political standpoint does not take into account their connection to the local communities in which they live. Their families have roots in their communities, and appear stable, despite their struggles related to financial hardships. Some skepticism exists, however, in the efficacy of sharing their stories with those who make decisions or affect policy.

**Deferred Action as hope.** The 2012 implementation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy represented for all participants a significant life event. Of the students who participated in the study, one had already applied for, and received, his work permit:

> August 15th, when it came out, I got on the ball. I took advantage of it. I was like this one time, this is gonna be probably the first and last time I'll get this. I just have to jump on it. I put all my savings towards it. I mean it's worth it. This benefits me in a lot of different ways. (Student 7)

Seven others were in various stages of the application process – from gathering the required documentation to waiting for the permit to be mailed to them. The remaining participant was unsure about applying; however she appeared to convince herself during the conversation that it was worth considering. The participants noted that

the ability to have a work permit became a positive step toward accessing greater opportunities, which in turn means increasing their access to college due to higher pay.

While there was a range of emotional connection to the process, overall the impact seemed related to hope for the future. The enthusiasm from family members sometimes rose above their personal reactions. Student 6 explains her subdued response:

> My parents were actually more excited than I was….I don't know, it's kinda like I've gotten excited other times, and that whole issue has like been like a barrier. I didn't want to get excited and then have something like ruin it, and then me just going -- just pretty much losing all hope.

Over the course of the focus groups, the discussions around DACA intertwined with their responses at different times throughout the conversations. While not emerging as a predominate theme in all areas, its significance became important even in the first questions asked. For example, when asked to describe himself, participant Student 7 made it a point to mention that he already received his card and felt "blessed" to have the opportunity for a brighter future.

**Future orientation**

When asked to look toward the future, the focus of the questions related to their progress toward their educational goals and the resources they may have to achieve those goals. The conversation revealed two themes: Goal Attainment and Accessing the American Dream.

**Goal attainment.** Prop 300, while a limiting factor as identified earlier, does not limit the determination to succeed. Every participant remains firm in their goal of completing a college degree and having a career in their field of study. Of the nine participants, three plan to earn a nursing degree, two skew toward business, one hopes to

become a journalist and two plan to become involved in STEM occupations such as chemical engineering or biology. The final participant fluctuates between psychology and graphic design.

Regardless of the progress toward their goals, which is wide ranging for these participants, few of the participants were prepared to rethink their goals. When asked if they had a "backup plan", most responded that they did not, or that they were determined to complete their education: "Oh, I know it's gonna come true. I don't got a backup plan. [Laughter] I don't, I don't, I don't, I don't. You should have one, but I don't cuz I have a lot of confidence in myself and I know I'm gonna make it happen" (Student 2). Even those who saw the potential for them not completing their degree of choice, the process still involved attending college and earning a degree or certificate:

> Lately I sorta thought that I was gonna do a—go to a medical assisting school. I do not, in any way, want to be a doctor or anything that has to do with medicine. I was just like oh, I'm gonna do that cuz it's only about nine months. A nine month program. I just felt like that is settling. That has been my back-up. (Student 9)

There is recognition, however, that to attain their goals requires the financial resources to attend college. This brings us to the intersection of three themes: DACA, Prop 300 and Education as the key to success. This tripod is significant because the ability to benefit from lower tuition is dependent upon access to a work permit that would provide resources to pay tuition when other financial aid options are unavailable: "Hopefully, if I'm to get this permit, I can work and that could be a resource. Then, hopefully I can get scholarships, as well. That's definitely gonna be one of my priorities, if I do get this permit" (Student 6). Participant Student 4 was in the same focus group, adding "once we get approved by Deferred Action, we'll have a Social, so we'll have a

lot more choices to getting a lot of scholarships." This thought was consistent during several of the conversations and provides a potential means of accessing the American Dream.

**Accessing the American Dream.** While the questions in this protocol did not specifically refer to the American Dream, the responses reflected the notion in many ways. Overall, the idea of having a degree, being in school, working and raising a family were consistent. Additionally, participants noted their desire to push beyond the successes of their parents, moving upward economically in order to live up to their parent's expectations. This provides motivation and adds to their determination.

Key to this idea is that of full participation in society and "definitely see myself giving back to the community, volunteering and learning a lot more about life, I guess" (Student 4). Again, the idea of paying taxes, engaging in civic life, motivates their efforts and hopes for the future, reflects an ethos of what it means to be an American.

There is, however, a sense that the dream they have may not be fully realized, even with the strides that have been made. Student 9 describes her future in this way:

> My plan was by the time I'm 24 I'm gonna be set. I'm gonna have my degree, I'm gonna have my family, my career, probably still be going to school. I actually don't know how long it would take....I'm not even worried about starting a family any time soon because I don't wanna start one thing without finishing this [degree]. Without having the satisfaction of being able to tell my children, 'Your mom has a degree, you're okay.' Because I don't feel like I can move on with my life until I finish this. It's hard to say right where I see myself five years from now because it's not clear. That road isn't really clear. Once we're able to finish our education then I'll probably see clearer.

**Debrief/Closing**

As a final question, I asked the participants to reflect on their experiences with Prop 300 and other immigration issues during high school. The prepared question

solicited “advice” to a fictitious student who may find him or herself in their situation while currently enrolled in high school. Out of the nine participants responding to this question, all nine of them replied with some variation of the same theme: Stay focused and do not give up.

**Stay focused and do not give up.** Much of the conversation around this question included advice for students in their situations that were consistently encouraging them to persist, to not give up, to work hard, stay focused and persevere:

- "Don’t give up. Keep going to school. Keep having—do your work. You’re gonna get there some day. You’re gonna fulfill your dream of whatever you wanna be. Just don’t give up." (Student 2)
- "I believe you have to keep your goal in mind, to be able to achieve it. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. I know that at times, it’s difficult to know where to go and who to ask for help.” (Student 4)
- “I would tell them not to give up. I mean, I know it looks rough, but teachers don’t say it was easy for them, either. Life after high school is rough, just hang in there. Good things will come.” (Student 5)
- “I'll tell him don't give up. There's always a way. If you might feel that you're feeling down, talk to somebody about it. You'll just go back up. That's it. Be persistent and have faith.” (Student 8)

Student 7’s message related to accessing college courses while in high school reinforced the need for focus and to remain positive:

> Focus because you can't do well in a situation and be mad at that for quite some time. All you're gonna do is gain nothing from it. All you have to do is focus, stick your nose in the books, and graduate high school. Try to take some college

> classes if you can, and just do the right thing, and just don't worry about that. Because you can't worry about something that you don't have control or power over. You just can't.

For some, their story became a cautionary tale. "Don't lose focus cuz I'm seeing the consequences now of not taking advantage of my high school years" (Student 1). Student 9 would ensure that any discussion about high school and beyond be grounded in their current situation:

> Reality hits you and don't be surprised if you didn't take advantage during high school and then all of a sudden everything's hard when you graduate... High school matters a lot more than you think it does. Honestly because they say high school are the best years of your life. I mean they should be but they're also the most defining years of your life.

**Conclusion**

The student focus groups provided insight into the experiences of the participants as immigrants, developing the stories of their early lives and their family's decisions to emigrate. As we began to unpack these conversations, the picture of the undocumented students in this study solidified, informing how the choices made by their families, including what high school to attend, affected their future. For these participants, the phrase "that's me belonging" sums up the protocol whose focus is on identity in its various iterations. Whether related to participating in the economic life of the country or to living freely without fear, biculturalism, connection to community, and the American Dream evoked significant responses from the participants.

The interplay of the themes in these protocols illustrate how interconnected they are for these undocumented individuals. Access to a college education has been impacted by Prop 300 for each individual, however DACA changes the script somewhat and the recognition of the need for DREAM Act reforms comes into clearer focus. Asking

individuals to predict their future lives reinforced the level of determination to complete their journey that began, for many of them, in high school. The importance of education appears to be a given as the plans they have for the future revolve around completing their goals, regardless of the struggles needed to overcome. Overall, the participants were clear in their advice to students in their situation. Students should be aware of the opportunities that present themselves and take advantage of them when you are able, understanding that the road ahead is a difficult one.

## Results - Parent Interviews

For the parent interviews, the discussion was divided into five protocols. The conversations were interpreted by a third person, paraphrasing the questions and responses during the conversation. Once the conversation was transcribed, the responses were translated into English to generate more accurate data for analysis. The parent themes that emerged are shown in Figure 11.

| **Building Rapport** | **Family History** | **Education and Proposition 300** | **Future Orientation** | **Debrief/ Closing** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Their Child is Motivated to Succeed | Emigrated for a Better Future, however life has been a struggle | Proposition 300 prevents their child from attending college | Children should work hard to be successful | Parents have a responsibility to help their children succeed |
| | | "Anti-immigration" laws hurt "good people" | | |

*Figure 11.* Parent group: Interview protocol and key themes.

It is important to note that all parent quotations are translations from their original Spanish. The parents who agreed to participate in the study were the mothers of Student 3 and Student 7.

**Building Rapport**

The conversations began by asking these participants to reflect on their child and their experience with education. Their children were both educated solely in the United States, having arrived before they turned 5 years old. The predominant theme of this protocol related to the students' personal motivation to succeed.

**Their child is motivated to succeed.** Each child has successfully graduated from high school and completed college credits through dual enrollment, with one of the students completing an Associates' degree as part of his high school program. The mothers were clearly pleased with the success their children had and described them in terms related to their success and their intelligence, recognizing their effort and hard work. "He was and is always thinking about succeeding" (Student 7's parent). Both parents noted that the past success made the challenges of post-secondary life that much more frustrating for their children. The mother of Student 3 noted that her daughter looked forward to finishing college after high school but has been frustrated by the lack of progress. Student 7's mother noted his annoyance in not being able to move forward in his education, but remains hopeful. "The most frustrating and sad part was that we

didn't have the money for him to continue his studies; now that he has obtained his documentation, he can succeed, he can pay for one or two classes and succeed."

**Family history**

Moving further into the conversation, this protocol attempted to get a sense of where the families came from physically and emotionally, recognizing that there have been challenges in the lives they have led. The theme that emerged related to their seeking a better life and a better future while struggling to achieve the life they sought in the United States.

**Emigrated for a better future, however life has been a struggle.** The parents described life in Mexico as difficult - rural, farm life, where hard work often displaced educational opportunities. They describe their experiences there as lacking in opportunity and the potential for their children to succeed. For Student 3's mother, although she followed her husband to the United States, she came primarily to make a better life for her daughter. She parroted her daughter's sentiments at one point, stating that she did not want her daughter's life to be as tough.

The mother of Student 7 stated that she wanted what is best for her sons. She describes her reasons for migrating as: "Poverty, unemployment, I was a single mom and I needed to give my kids a better life in all aspects." Once in the United States, it was hard raising children as a single parent but she always worked for what was best for her sons. They talk about a "what if" situation – what if you never came here, what would their lives be like in Mexico? What it would have been? She noted that these conversations end with her sons offering an appreciation for her decision to relocate.

For both parents, life has meant some struggle. Student 7's mother describes their lives as "humble", full of hard work and appreciative of the compensation she has had for her work. She noted that she fights to move her family forward and to succeed. Student 3's mother echoes her sentiments and adds that the climate in Arizona has been difficult. "Well, right now we have a fear because [Maricopa County Sheriff] Arpaio goes everywhere and you do not hear anything other than 'Arpaio.' It gets us a bit scared because you can see they have made many raids."

**Education and Proposition 300**

The conversation turned specifically toward education and the impact of Proposition 300 for their families and their children. Thematically, two ideas came forward from this conversation: Proposition 300 prevents access to college and "anti-immigrant" legislation hurts people.

**Proposition 300 prevents their child from attending college.** Having children that participated in college coursework in high school, the transition to post-secondary life challenged the families because they were unprepared for the financial burden placed upon them by the higher tuition rates established through Prop 300. Both parents described working hard to help their children, but the increases significantly limit the amount of help they can offer and is a source of frustration for them: not being able to pay the tuition rates that currently exist. Student 3's mother described what happened after the local community college district raised tuition threefold in 2011:

> It really affected us, because when my daughter graduated, I could pay for three or four classes but the suddenly we got this law and now, I could no longer pay. I said no because the class was $1300. We were greatly affected both her and me.

The mother of Student 7 described her frustration with not knowing how she would be able to help pay for college, stating, "There are not enough houses to clean to pay for his tuition."

**"Anti-immigration" laws hurt "good people".** When asked to give their opinion regarding "anti-immigrant" legislation, specifically Prop 300, it is important to note that the other laws that have been passed impact their lives significantly and entered into the conversation. SB1070 was mentioned as a law that has hurt them personally, restricting their freedom and increasing a feeling of racism targeting their community that has changed how they live their lives. Each participant described how things were "easier" before the current situation and that their ability to have better wages and benefits such as driver's licenses increased the difficulties they have in their daily lives.

The sentiment regarding these laws is that they are misdirected; they should target "bad people", not students and those who work hard and are here to be successful. Both parents noted that students should not be punished, especially those who hope to be successful, reflected in this statement by the mother of Student 3. "Do not give everyone a chance but students, young people, they can become something in life, if you give them the opportunity. It's not fair that they are studying, studying and studying and suddenly can no longer. Their future sits there." She added that after having completed a number of credits in high school, these policies have "cut off the wings of my daughter."

**Future**

Asked to describe their hopes for their family's future, the responses elicited one refrain in particular: the hope that their children will be able to continue their education and become successful.

**Children should work hard to be successful.** As parents, the mothers of these two participants seek what many parents want for their children: to follow their dreams and to be successful. Both parents described how their pride in their child's accomplishments reflects well on their children but hope for them that they can move to higher levels of achievement. The children are described as motivated and resilient, and the message from Student 7's mother is to "study, study more and to be better every day to become a good man." For Student 3's mother, her recognition of her daughter's past success gives her hope for her future potential "she did it alone, she learned alone, alone, alone and came out ahead." She notes a different attitude between her daughter and her younger children, both born in the United States. She has concerns for their lack of ambition and sees her daughter as a positive force and role model for the younger siblings.

**Debrief/Closing**

While much of the conversation focused upon their families and their experiences, this final protocol asked these parents to provide insight to other parents who may have children in the same situation in high school, that is, undocumented and affected by Prop 300. The primary theme that emerged in this segment reflected on the role of the parent as significant motivational factors in their child's lives.

**Parents have a responsibility to help their children succeed.** As advice to parents in a similar situation, these parents encourage others to stay motivated about supporting their children; parents must recognize their need for help and it is your responsibility to do so. The child cannot accomplish this alone. "There are always people asking me that, I tell them they have to help them so that they stay in school, because

although it is expensive and all if they have the means to help them, help them" (Student 3). Paying for one class at a time may keep them motivated to succeed after high school and it is worth the effort.

For Student 7's mother, it is important for families to remain positive. They will encounter obstacles along the way and those need to be there as a reminder of where they want to go, to keep moving on and keep believing that it will be better in the future. "Everything is possible, fight for everything and you will get it….but one has go through all that to be able to receive good things. Support them like somebody once supported me." She sees in this situation an opportunity for a better future regardless of the struggle it takes to get there.

**Conclusion**

For these parents, their children have demonstrated their ability to succeed and to complete college. They recognize that they are motivated and desire to move forward but feel thwarted by the current situation related to tuition, a source of frustration for a parent hoping to help their child reach their goals. Despite the challenges they face, the mothers in this conversation affirm their decision to emigrate as a chance for their family to succeed. The lives they have created in the United States are cultivated to provide their children with that opportunity to the best of their ability. For these participants, Proposition 300 and other immigration legislation stagnated their child's potential for success and access to college, especially following their successful high school careers. Additional legislation, such as SB 1070, affects their daily lives and, while a significant challenge, appears to them misguided in its intent when it affects honest, hard working people.

The parents described their dreams for the future success of their children. The comments related to their ability to succeed and their intention to complete their education reflects their hopes that they will ultimately achieve that goal. When asked to share advice with parents, the response centered on their willingness to work hard to help their children succeed. Invest in college classes for your children whenever possible to build motivation, regardless of the challenges presented by tuition rates.

## Results – Employee Interviews

As with the other two groups, the employee interviews were built around specific protocols. The variation in these protocols is a function of their occupation and experience with youth. The protocols and themes are illustrated in Figure 12 below.

| **Building Rapport** | **Work with Students, Proposition 300** | **Membership** | **Future** | **Debrief/ Closing** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Helping youth transition to college | Education is the key to success, despite the barriers created by Prop 300 | Freedom of self-determination | Proposition 300 influences at the micro and macro level | Immigration reform is necessary to provide equal access for students |
| | Deferred Action changes the conversation | Meaningful contributions to society | | |

*Figure 12.* Employee group: Interview protocol and key themes.

**Building rapport**

This protocol set the tone by asking the interviewees to describe the work that they do and their job responsibilities. Having representation from two levels of education, university and high school, as well as a non-profit organization, the responses varied considerably however the common theme of their responses was a commitment to working with youth in an effort to assist them with a successful transition to college.

**Helping youth transition to college.** The participants described careers that are student centered and focused on the successful transition of the students they serve. In general, the group worked with students underrepresented in higher education: minority students, students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, and students with learning disabilities.

Although one of the participants, the ASU Employee, does not have daily contact with students, her role in supporting the university leadership targets specific initiatives for student outreach. Her priorities for youth are ensuring that the university's outreach is "strategic and effective" in order to reach talented students who meet the demographic described earlier. The CEO of the youth leadership program describes part of her role as a support for undocumented students, stating that those students involved in the program "become very empowered and have hope and faith that something will happen for them." This organization is a grassroots effort to close the gap in colleges related to the underrepresentation of minorities, especially Latino youth. There is a strong social justice component coupled with an intentional attempt at demystifying not only the college application process, but also the "next steps" for success at that level.

The high school employees assist students as they transition to post-secondary opportunities. One of the employees, a social worker at a large urban high school, helps students navigate their journey to adulthood by focusing on set transition goals and working to help students achieve those goals. For the counselor, who works at a large, suburban high school, this means coordinating the multiple accelerated learning options offered at her school, especially for those who are underrepresented:

> I am the ACE Coordinator, Dual Enrollment Coordinator, Early College Coordinator and Hoop of Learning Coordinator… [The programs] give them the opportunity to navigate through a college system while they're still in high school, so when they make that transition it's a smooth one.

Further in the conversation, she voiced a sentiment that was consistent to this theme and translated across all participants. "In my school world, I just want everybody to get an education, and I don't care who you are." Each participant was aware of undocumented students as part of their population and had worked with several on education-related issues, and has had experience with Proposition 300.

**Work with students/Prop 300**

The employee interviews revealed two themes centered on the issue of working with students and its intersection with Proposition 300. Thematically, the conversations around their work included the following concepts: education is the key to success, despite barriers created by Prop 300, and that the ability to apply for deferred action has changed the discussion.

**Education is the key to success, despite the barriers created by Prop 300.** Each interviewee described the importance of education as part of their conversations with students. For the CEO, that conversation involved recognition of the student's

personal motivation to succeed: “For the most part, Prop 300 has not been something that has held them back. They are still very fired up." The university employee describes the undocumented students that remain at ASU as highly motivated:

> What I’ve found in my experience is that they are super high-achieving and they’re resilient. They’ve been through so much already that when they get here they’re gonna finish. They’re gonna succeed…They’re focused and they have a goal, and they’re gonna accomplish it. For a lot of them, like I said, they were at the tops of their class. They were eligible for merits—they would have been had, if not for the passage of Proposition 300, eligible for these scholarships because they were academically at the top of their class.

Between the high school employees, there is recognition of the importance of education that resonates with the students they serve. The counselor described a student whose family continues to pay higher tuition rates for dual enrollment, recognizing the importance of education:

> I have no idea how her family is paying for this because if she’s not documented, I’m guessing they aren’t either, which means they can’t be making a whole lot ‘cuz working under the table or working off of a [fake] social security card. I tried to talk her out of it and tell her this is not financially wise for you to do this. She’s like, “No, my dad wants me to get the education."

As educators, the participants were all aware of the impact that Proposition 300 had on students. Described as both initially devastating and continually frustrating, there were stories to illustrate its impact at all levels. The university employee recalled the time when the passage of Prop 300 became a reality for students at the university:

> Those kids worked hard and many of them were eligible for merit scholarships, but they were not able to receive them because of the passage of the proposition...legally we couldn’t give it to them, so then their financial aid award changed and the price tag changed dramatically.

The social worker reiterates this point in describing students who have potential and should be college-bound, but because of their status see little hope for the future.

"When I ask them what their goals are, their response is typically, 'Well it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter.'" There is a sense of this being an added aspect of poverty and financial instability, being "priced out" of the opportunity to participate. Choices made to attend college or take dual enrollment courses run up against the reality of day-to-day life. While this thought may be pervasive, recently the conversation has begun to change due in part to DACA.

**Deferred Action changes the conversation.** Reflecting on the impact of DACA, there were similar perspectives from all participants. The refrain echoed the conversations had with students – hopeful that DACA will have a positive impact and will help them achieve their goals. The interviewees noted that undocumented students recognize the potential of DACA to achieve at a level equal to their peers.

- "I think it gives them some hope and that they can start dreaming and believing that they can be a part of something. I think they've always wanted to just because this is home, but they also had on their shoulder or in the back of their head the whispers of, 'You don't really belong here. You don't really belong here.'" (Social Worker)
- "I think this is the year that because kids are coming forward and identifying themselves, and freely doing it. I think this is that year that we're gonna find out where a lot of these kids end up going." (Counselor)
- "… students who are eligible for Deferred Action have a sense of relief now because I think that what it—I mean in addition to hope in general, it also gives them some peace of mind in knowing that when they finish their degree

> they can actually use it… Deferred Action has offered a lot of them relief in that sense." (ASU Employee)

For several of the employees, however, their understanding of DACA is limited. There are unanswered questions and a feeling that they were not fully prepared to help students with the answers. The high school counselor described her school's ignorance of the policy. "we have people coming in every day wanting their documentation. Well we don't actually know what that means." The unknown aspects of how DACA will affect tuition and education frustrates employees as well, reflected in the conversation with the CEO:

> Tuition is difficult, because I mean now they can go, but the tuition plan, I guess, now is so unclear. I think the latest is that, what I've heard, is the students who are fine through deferred action will be able to go to school at—is it—I mean, I don't know. Some people say yes…There's others that say no, they won't.

**Membership**

The inclusion of this protocol addresses the concept of membership and how the interviewees perceive the American Dream. As explored in other settings, the phrase lends itself to multiple perspectives and interpretations; however two distinct themes emerged from these interviews: the freedom of self-determination and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

**Freedom of self-determination.** The notion of self-determination included in these conversations the ability of students to create a vision of the future that includes successfully reaching the goals they set. While the ability to set those goals exists regardless of status, the reality of how to achieve them changes for those without legal status. Among the interviewees, the theme resonates consistently.

From the higher education perspective, the ASU employee notes that the students at university have made a conscious decision to move forward in their education as a means of achieving their goals despite the high cost involved:

> The students have that vision for themselves. That's why they're here and that I think in some ways is what keeps them here, because they want to continue working towards their future, at least what they hope will be their future one day, whenever that day comes.

This echoes the sentiment of the CEO, describing the ability to achieve goals and that the solution lies with education at any level.

In the secondary settings, both employees described the American Dream as significant for their students. The social worker's response reflected more on the concept of the American Dream and the disconnect students, especially undocumented students, may have to its meaning. The phrase is something heard throughout their lives and may not have meaning for them: "I don't know if they really understand it. I mean their family members came here to have a better life, running from something. Just like America was founded on. Maybe it's just trying to get them to understand that and then dream for themselves." The counselor notes that she strongly believes in the concept of self-determination, which must be accomplished in a way that is responsible and conforms to the laws and norms of the country. For her, "everybody has the right to make their life…everybody has the obligation to also make their life." This obligation develops further into the idea of contributing as a member of society.

**Meaningful contributions to society.** The interviews reveal a belief that the undocumented students the participants work with are members of this society but contribute at varying levels. Their education is an indication of their potential to

participate fully. Similar to discussions with the students, these individuals see the responsibilities of membership as parallel to being productive in a way that benefits the whole, reflected in the statement made by the counselor: "I believe that everybody has the ability to contribute and to do great things if you catch them early." According to the CEO, students seek membership that is meaningful:

> Being able to fully participate in everything: education, civically, socially, economically, that they can truly participate.... the American dream is to be able to follow that constitution, and really, truly have equality for all.

**Future**

As adults working with youth of varying ages, the employees discussion of the future impact of Proposition 300 as it exists is clear and definitive for this group: laws such as these are shortsighted and have consequences on a micro and a macro level.

**Proposition 300 influences at the micro and macro level.** In general, the discussion of the future can be delineated into micro and macro level consequences. On the micro level, the participants agreed that these laws affect youth, called "inhumane" by the CEO, representing a step backwards in civil rights. In her response, the CEO notes that the laws not only impact the students she encounters, but have an effect upon those in their immediate lives – parents, relatives and friends who may or may not share their status but are affected due to the mean-spiritedness of the laws. For the social worker, this represents the greater injustice. "We're calling out human people and now we're rating them second-class. We're rating people when—again, that's just going backwards. I don't understand how we're moving forward with any of that." For the ASU employee, Prop 300 represents a dissociation with the mission of publicly funded higher education. "It's really disheartening to me that as a state public institution our mission is to educate -

our primary mission is to educate the citizens and the students of Arizona, and because of a law that was passed we can't do that fully."

On a macro level, the participants noted its impact as equally significant. For the ASU employee, continuing her thought regarding future impact, that the university and the state have the potential to "miss out" on talent that could represent the university well and contribute to the state in the future:

> These are students that would have come to ASU, that would have graduated and would have gotten a job…hopefully they would have gotten a job here in Arizona, be paying taxes in the state of Arizona, buying goods, living at a higher level than cleaning houses or doing yards, which, for some of them, that's where they ended up.

These sentiments are consistent with the input received by the CEO and the high school educators. Each described, in some way, the benefit of having educated youth enter into the economic engine of the country and its potentially positive impact. Again, the CEO mirrors the conversations held with the students regarding their desire to be a productive member of our society: "These are kids who wanna contribute. They want to pay tax—they do pay taxes, they just don't get anything back, but they want to work. They want to contribute."

**Debrief/Closing**

At this point in the interview, participants were asked to describe their feelings about Proposition 300 and what they would like to see happen in the future around this law. As a group, the response pertained to the larger idea of immigration reform not limited to Proposition 300, however the recognition that state laws have recently collided with federal policy obfuscates the potential for a positive outcome from immigration reform.

**Immigration reform is necessary to provide equal access for students.** The clear theme that developed around this issue is to do away with Proposition 300 as a part of greater immigration reform, including full passage of the DREAM Act, making permanent the steps taken with DACA. Educators sense the challenges of promoting higher education but limiting access for those based upon their residency. This disconnect is described by the counselor. "If the law states that you can be here and get educated and you don't have to show documentation. Then we give you the best education we can." There is a recognition that our goal is to educate future leaders and reform is necessary to capitalize on that investment in all youth, equally. However, there is a larger concern that the ability of Arizona students to benefit may not be clearly defined, in light of the actions of our state leaders over the past few years. The ASU employee expressed her concerns, stating "When it [the DREAM Act] was almost gonna pass I was—I wanted it to pass, obviously, but it still was a question in the back of my mind, well is it still—is it gonna benefit our students?"

**Conclusion**

For these individuals, the importance of education is evident in the dedication they have to their work. Access to higher education becomes their means of providing service to all youth, regardless of status, but there is recognition that the situation for an undocumented student differs from their resident peers. This expands the understanding of how Prop 300 has affected the work of educators in the schools, especially for those who work with undocumented students. Despite the obstacles, there is evidence in these conversations that employees are witness to students who recognize the importance of education and express hope that DACA makes a difference in this situation.

While the concept of the American Dream seems clear to the interviewees themselves, the translation of that dream by students in their experience varies. The conversations echo the sentiments of the students regarding their ability to succeed as a member of this society and to have the chance to give back to the community. In looking to the future impact of Proposition 300, with no change to the legislation or the current situation, the employees interviewed see the law as shortsighted and a step backwards. In their estimation, the law has hurt individuals and families on a micro level and has affected the university and future of the state's economic development on a macro level. If the goal of the law is meant to hurt people, there is a sense that it is counterproductive to society. Regardless of their status, their participation makes a difference.

The educators interviewed for this study describe a need to change the policy as it exists; yet they recognize that shift cannot occur in a vacuum. Without comprehensive reform measures in place at a federal level, the ability of undocumented students in Arizona regarding laws such as Proposition 300 seems, to these participants, uncertain.

## Summary

In this chapter, the analysis of data involved deconstructing the interview protocols that shaped the questions and the structure of the conversations into the themes that emerged in the analytic process. The student focus groups revealed information relative to their experiences as undocumented students in high school. The students continued to tell the story of their post-secondary lives and how Prop 300 has been influential in that time. Additional information regarding their sense of self and membership included discussions around the American Dream and the opportunities offered to them through the Deferred Action program, as well as its potential impact on their lives and their future goals. As the conversation shifted to the parents' perspective, the themes that emerged reflected upon the lives of their families and the overall impact of the current climate in Arizona, as it relates to their experiences. Finally, the employees provided institutional perspectives ranging from secondary schools to university and included non-profit social agency work. They shared a different perspective on the experiences of undocumented students and how their work is directly involved in their student's lives.

Chapter 4 looked closely at the emerging themes, including insights into the personal stories of students, parents, and employees. The resulting conversations included a significant amount of information relative to the research question described in Chapter 1. In Chapter 5, I will synthesize the information from each participant group in an effort to reach a greater understanding of the research question while connecting these themes to the concepts introduced in the literature review, expanding the conversation as

a result. A discussion of the implications, recommendations, limitations, and opportunities for further research completes this work.

# CHAPTER 5

# SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLICATIONS

In order to assist the reader, Chapter 5 of this dissertation restates the research problem and reviews the methods used for the research study before summarizing the results and discussing the implications of those results.

## Restatement of the Problem

The research in this study attempts to address the problem identified in Chapter 1. That is, while the Supreme Court's 1982 decision *Plyler v. Doe* provides undocumented immigrant children equal access to K-12 public education, that equity falters when undocumented high school-aged students seek opportunities to register for college courses through dual or concurrent enrollment programs. The laws passed in Arizona and other states that restrict access to public benefits for undocumented immigrants establish a two-tiered tuition structure for students whose only difference from their peers relates to their immigration status, regardless of the length of time they have been physically present in the state or in the county.

Arizona's Proposition 300, enacted through voter initiative in 2006, denies access to in-state tuition for students who cannot provide proof of residency. For students who have been educated in the United States for most or all of their lives, participating in a system that promotes access to college for all, the problems arise when the desire to accelerate learning through dual or concurrent enrollment intersects policies that scaffold tuition structures based upon residency status. This disparity effectively shuts out students whose families often cannot afford the tuition at that rate, creating a system of *de facto* segregation of access in public high schools.

## Review of Methodology

As a qualitative study, the research relied upon focus groups and interviews of three stakeholder groups: undocumented students, their parents, and the employees in educational institutions who work with them. Undocumented high school graduates comprised the largest group participating in the study. Nine students who graduated from high school within the past five years participated in four focus groups to discuss issues surrounding their education, self-concept and broader ideas of membership related to Proposition 300. From those nine students, two parents agreed to participate in interviews regarding their child's experiences and the impact they have seen in their lives around these issues. Finally, employees from two levels of education, secondary and higher education, participated in interviews in an effort to gain perspective from individuals outside of the issue but affected by the students process. As part of the employee group, the founder and CEO of an educational support non-profit agency participated in the study and provided a different perspective than her colleagues working in education.

The qualitative approach to this study gave voice to a constituency currently underrepresented in the literature regarding in-state tuition policies. Much of the focus of tuition policy related to undocumented persons falls to the college-aged student. Little is known regarding the experiences of the high school students who find themselves in this situation. Hearing the stories and aspirations of the participants provided a wealth of data for analysis and resulted in the emergence of several themes related to this question.

## Summary of the Results

The results of this study illustrated the impact of Proposition 300 in the lives of undocumented students seeking accelerated learning options while attending high school; however the discussion broadened to include conversations relevant to this topic, including discussions of membership and other themes.

### Students

Related to the frameworks described in Chapter 2, the students addressed the following issues:

1. Education is key to their future success as a means of upward assimilation, despite struggles with poverty, status, or other setbacks.
2. Membership relates to their identity as Americans, having lived in the United States for a significant portion of their lives. The participants look toward a future of full participation in all aspects, incorporating the American Dream as a part of their future.
3. Proposition 300 had a chilling effect upon their ability to participate in accelerated learning during high school and continues to impact their ability to meet their personal goals for education.
4. President Obama's 2012 executive order creating Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) represents a significant step forward and a change in the future for those who apply.

**Parents**

The conversations with the parents revealed similar results to those held with their children. Several key points emerged related to this study:

1. The decision to emigrate was based upon a desire to improve their opportunities and to provide for their families a better quality of life. They are committed to helping their children succeed.
2. They have seen the impact of Proposition 300 and other laws targeting the challenges of undocumented immigrants in Arizona. That experience has led to frustration over their inability to assist their children financially due to the increased cost of tuition.
3. Parents and children will work hard to be successful, regardless of the obstacles they may face.

**Employees**

For the employee group, dissonance occurs between the goals they have for helping youth achieve a college education and the laws that prevent their undocumented students from accessing college equitably. In their conversations, the employees discussed the following key points:

1. The impact of Proposition 300 and other laws for students and families has been significant.
2. These policies affect their schools and the state on a micro and macro level.
3. As individuals working with students, their personal experience points to the frustration placed upon them but there is hope in the potential for immigration reform, spurred on by the implementation of DACA.

## Discussion of the Results

Stake (2010) describes the process of qualitative research design as an opportunity to deepen the understanding of the complexity of the situation being studied, enabling the researcher to contribute to the discourse that occurs relative to a phenomenon. The occasion to explore this issue among three different constituency groups generated a conversation with greater depth of response relative to the original research question. As a qualitative study, the ability to examine the concepts through multiple lenses, including my own perspective as practitioner and researcher, provided definition and clarity to answer the question more thoroughly.

**Research question.** The question raised in Chapter 1 of this study is: *What are the educational, social,and emotional effects for undocumented students based upon their inability to meet the criteria set forth through Prop 300, preventing equal access to college courses taken while in high school?*

***Interpretation of the findings.*** There is an abundance of information contained in the conversations held in focus groups and in interviews that addresses the research question. Breaking the question into three areas delineated in the question may provide clarity in the overall understanding of the results.

*Educational effects.* The results of this study reveal that there has been an impact upon students as they attempted to complete credits while in high school. For some, Prop 300 limited the amount of credits that could be attempted while in high school, especially following the rise in tuition in 2011 for those in schools that partner with Maricopa Community Colleges for dual or concurrent enrollment. As students graduated, the impact of the policy became more problematic as they transitioned to post-secondary life.

The lingering effects of the policy continue as of this study. Because of this tuition policy, none of the student participants currently takes college courses, either through community colleges or through the university system (public or private). The students voiced a direct correlation between the two in their discussion. The parents reinforce the challenges they have in making tuition payments and the hard choices they have in providing assistance for school when the cost is prohibitive. As educators, the employees express frustration over their ability to help students realize their dreams of a college education when the costs are so high and the disparity exists for those who are undocumented.

The students in this study fit the criteria for the recruitment of participants; each one motivated to take college courses during high school as part of their course of study. It is important to note that for two of the students, they were able to complete their Associate's degree while in high school. For those students, the benefit of having a school with the resources to provide private scholarships directly affected their ability to do so. This contrasted with the student whose school did not have the resources to support his ability to take dual enrollment courses and subsequently meant that he was unable to complete any college credits while in high school, even though he met the eligibility requirements. Others in the study found their ability to benefit limited by scholarship money and personal finances. There is a relationship then between the ability of students in high school to access dual enrollment because of tuition policy and the cost of access.

*Social effects.* The student participants in the study described their disenfranchisement related to their efforts to access educational opportunities on a par

with their resident peers. The interest, or disinterest, that other students had in taking college classes served as a reminder to the students of the limitations they have placed upon them in this situation. Several students in the study expressed their frustration at having the desire to partake in college courses but by virtue of their status, being shut out of the process, illustrated by Student 2's simple question: "Why can't I get it?" Proposition 300 represented for them a barrier to achieving their vision of full participation in society and giving back to the country that is their home. Participation represented by their complete inclusion in the economic and civic life of this country.

There is a sense of belonging to this society in the conversation that is impeded by the recognition of their status, reinforced in their daily lives, and in the work they do. The fear of discovery coupled with the shadow of deportation does little to tarnish the drive to succeed. For each of the participants, college remains a significant goal, however one currently out of reach because of tuition rates. These personal goals have not diminished, despite the obstacles presented. Their resolve appears bolstered by the implementation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, providing students with access to legal work, broadening the opportunities for them. This also has a profound effect on their emotional reactions to Prop 300.

*Emotional effects*. Describing how they felt about Prop 300 elicited responses that included feelings of frustration, anger, sadness, and disappointment. There is a sense of resignation when it comes to issues dealing with immigration and the intersection of those issues in the lives of the undocumented students. The high school social worker echoed the sentiment in her discussion of the work she has done with students. Students described feeling singled out: trapped in a situation they were placed into, not of their

own choosing, with few options available to make a change of their own volition. The ability to return to college to complete their education reveals their resolve in pursuit of their goals and aspirations. The personal challenges they face are those they are willing to confront in order to succeed and meet the expectations and sacrifices of their parents. The parents' support of these goals reflects the vision they had in coming to the United States – provide a better life and better opportunities for their families and to have them succeed.

The conversations themselves were at times emotionally charged. Several times in the interviews, parents and students became tearful in describing how their lives have been affected by their status and the consequences of laws such as Proposition 300. The current climate in the state of Arizona also elicited some emotion around the actions of political figures such as Sheriff Joe Arpaio and Governor Brewer on one side of the spectrum and President Obama on the other. This serves as a reminder of the humanity behind the issues being considered regarding immigration policy.

## Insights

Several themes stand out in this conversation regarding residency, tuition and personal experiences. Chapter 4 provided discussion of the results and identified a number of key themes that emerged through the analysis of data gathered over the course of the study. Of those themes, those which reverberated for me across all three stakeholder groups include the connection to community as a whole, the obstacles to achieving a college education faced by the undocumented student, and the strength of the American Dream as a vision of the future for those who see themselves as "American".

There is recognition within this study that for this group of individuals, the ability to give back to their community informs their choices in how they see their lives unfolding. As noted earlier, out of nine students interviewed, five plan to pursue service related fields of study, such as nursing. Several of the participants regard volunteering as an important means of "giving back" to the community, which continued in their lives outside of school. The dedication they have to their families and the support they receive from them recognizes the complexity of their lives and the challenges they have faced. Additionally, the concept of giving back related to their ability to participate in paying taxes, seen as a milestone of achievement for at least one of the participants, representing engagement in the country's economic and civic life.

Part of that challenge is the need to overcome obstacles related to their education and the completion of their degree work. For each student, there was a desire to complete, at a minimum, a bachelors' degree in their chosen field with several students planning to pursue graduate work beyond that milestone. Their efforts, however, may continue to be thwarted by policies that restructure the tuition rate they pay due to their status. Recently, due to the potential acquisition of work permits through Deferred Action, those barriers may have changed for those enrolling in community college classes (Maricopa Community College District, 2012; Joffe-Block, 2012). The impact upon university tuition rates remains unchanged at this time, continuing the policy that places higher tuition fees upon those who cannot prove their residency. As of this writing, the Arizona Board of Regents does not recognize the work permit provided through DACA as proof of residency for in-state tuition at its three state universities (Joffe-Block, 2012). This inability to complete coursework beyond the community college level disrupts the

process of earning a degree beyond a two year degree because of the financial burden out of state tuition will continue to represent for those in pursuit of a bachelors degree. This is a journey that relates to their vision of themselves as successful reflected in the ideals of the American Dream.

As DREAMers, this vision of their future is measured in part by their access to the American Dream. The students who grew up and were educated in American schools described the American Dream as the ability to seek opportunities for self-improvement, promotion, and future success. The attainment of this vision relies upon the realization of starting a family, being happy, and being part of a whole. This resonated in their discussions, reminiscent of the frameworks described in the literature review.

**Prior Research and the Relationship to the Literature Review**

In Chapter 2, I discussed the concept of *transnationalism* and two theoretical frameworks I felt related to this topic: substantive membership and segmented assimilation. This study informs the discussion around these three concepts.

**Transnationalism.** In the context of this study, the issues surrounding transnationalism exist partially for the students involved in the study. As described in the literature, the concept related to a bicultural experience is embedded in the experiences of the students and families who participated in the study. The integration of their culture does not reflect their formal citizenship. Rather their identity, while informed by their ethnic/cultural identity, relates more closely to their membership in this society while maintaining their roots in a different cultural experience. Their experience of being part of the 1.5 generation, brought here as small children without legal status, is consistent

with the research that finds their experiences to be similar to that of a second-generation immigrant (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010).

The concept of transnationalism presumes direct attachments and experiences to both countries. Of the student participants, only two have clear memories of living in Mexico, experiencing life in Mexican schools, immersed in the culture of their country of origin. Their knowledge of the traditions came from first-hand exposure at a young age. The other students do not have the ability to draw comparisons directly to what life in Mexico was like, having lived in the United States most of their lives, learning about their culture from family traditions and conversation. Travel to Mexico has not been possible due to their inability to cross borders freely. Discussions about their heritage reflect their distance from what it means to live equally as part of both cultures. While there is pride in their heritage, there is no first-hand familiarity. As a construct, then, it may be argued that the experience of these students is not strictly transnational in nature.

**Substantive membership.** In discussions related to the concept of the American Dream, we see that the students in the study relate to those ideals as a reflection of their membership in this society. This idea of membership, described by Perry (2006), relates to those qualities of being a part of a whole that resonate with the lives of these participants. Perry's framework includes such principles as residency, social awareness, reciprocation, investment, identification, patriotism, destiny, and law abidingness. For each of these attributes, there is evidence in this study for these participants. These tangible and intangible aspects to membership became evident throughout the conversation. In Chapter 2, I focused predominately on the idea of *destiny* as the quality that resonates with this population. While important, the responses of this group mirror

multiple aspects of Perry's framework. For example, Student 4's statement early the course of this conversation echoes a patriotic view of the United States as "people are gonna seek and look for ways to come to America, to the greatest country in the world."

As I reflect upon Perry's framework, his conceptualization of how membership translates to individual experience is reflected within this study. Heard throughout the discussions, the economic factors of their participation in society came through clearly in the discussion. The inclusion of conversations around taxes and economic participation matched Perry's description of *investment* as a factor in ascribing membership. Student 1 made profound statements regarding her desire to pay taxes as a means of contributing, and at one point becoming emotional in her description. Others in the study reflected that sentiment as well as other milestones that would reflect their membership, such as accessing financial aid, scholarships, or applying for a driver's license.

**Segmented assimilation.** Chapter 2 includes information regarding segmented assimilation as a potential pathway for undocumented students. As described by Portes and Zhou (1993), this concept refers to three possible trajectories of assimilation: parallel integration, following a traditional path of assimilation into the middle class; rapid economic advancement with little or no assimilation into the broader culture; and downward assimilation, leading to permanent membership in an impoverished underclass. Altschul et al. (2008) expand our understanding of this phenomenon relative to undocumented or other "low status" minority groups.

In this study, the potential for downward assimilation theoretically exists for these participants; however their self-concept of where they are economically and as members of the society reflects a vision of themselves as on the traditional path of upward

assimilation and cultural integration. Several discussions revealed their difficulties with finances; however there is pride evident in the perseverance of their families, including stories of the struggles that occur because of their legal status. Student 7 describes his family as "middle class" and represents that upward path: rising out of poverty through hard work and access to education. His mother shared her motivation for emigrating to the United States based upon the need to lift her family out of poverty. "I was a humble and poor mother, and I still am fighting to bring my family forward." Her work as a housekeeper is difficult and does not provide enough money to cover the bills and to help pay for college, but she has provided a comfortable home, a stable environment, and the support for her child's dreams of upward mobility. There is a confidence in the future potential of these individuals throughout their conversations.

For others in the study, the goals and their progress toward them are counter to the potential described in Chapter 2 regarding downward assimilation. While challenging, the notion of giving up on the American Dream is not an option for these participants. Out of the nine student participants, eight have college credits from their time in high school. This early success in college access influenced their future orientation by giving them a chance to see themselves in the role of college student, to be exposed to coursework beyond high school and to affirm that education for them is a pathway to upward mobility. Through DACA, that pathway becomes attainable in a way that now seems real to these participants.

**Unanticipated results: The influence of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.** This study began as an exploration of the issues I witnessed since the passage of Prop 300 in 2006, first as a high school counselor and subsequently as an administrator

in a high school with a large undocumented student population. As I began the investigation – reviewing the literature, developing a framework, and proposing the study – there was little hope for movement on immigration issues. The DREAM Act had failed multiple attempts of its congressional supporters to see legislation passed on a national level and the upcoming elections in 2012 effectively stalled progress on many issues. President Obama's announcement of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy in June of 2012 changed the equation for the students involved in this study. Before the adoption of this policy, the options available to these students were limited, prompting this research in the direction of the possible outcomes and effects upon assimilation and the concept of membership. Prior to DACA, there was no "path" to follow that would increase the potential connection between the educational experiences of an undocumented student and their access to the American Dream.

In this study, the students shared multiple times that their ability to benefit from DACA has changed their future perspective. DACA has ignited new hope for the possibilities of completing college and finding work in their career, rather than limiting their work options. These students understand the temporary nature of this policy but remain hopeful that greater reforms are in the works and that some aspects of the DREAM Act may be within reach. Conceptually, DACA became a framework that evolved independent of and parallel to this study, becoming as important as the other aspects of this research. If I were to alter the graphic representation from Chapter 2 with that information, DACA would be illustrated as a ladder that provides a means for some individuals to overcome, in part, the disparities experienced due to Proposition 300 (see Figure 13).

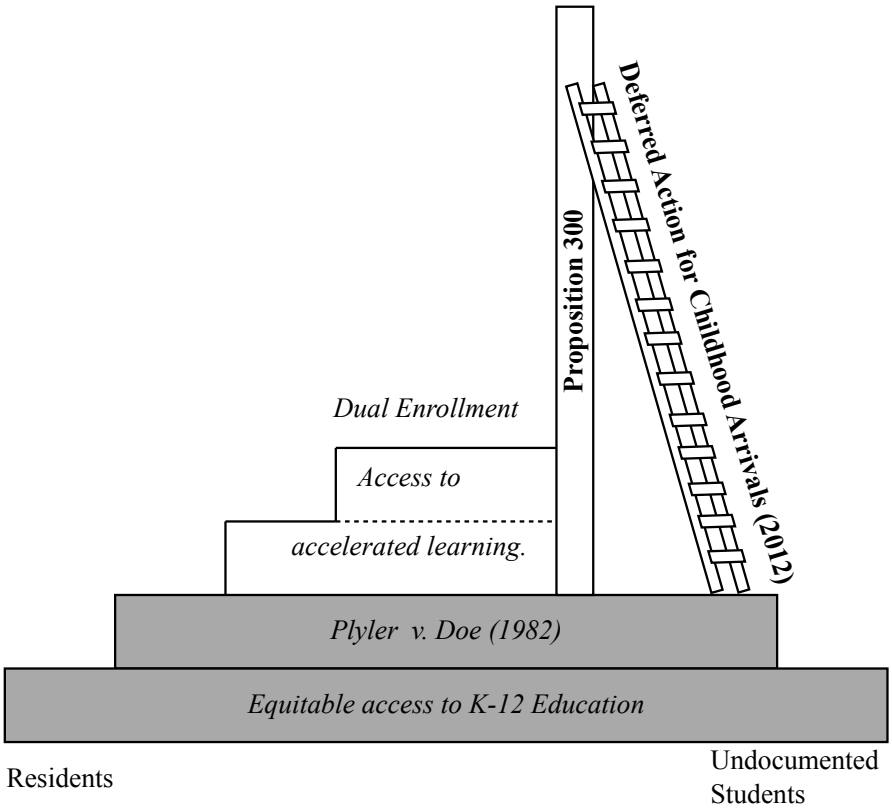


*Figure 13*. Representation of Proposition 300 as a barrier to equal access and the impact of Deferred Action upon access to accelerated learning.

To that point, there are aspects of this study that changed over this issue and deserve further exploration as undocumented students continue to apply for and receive work permits, change their ability to access courses through decreased tuition, and look toward the future as DACA evolves or is replaced.

## Recommendations

This study represents a journey I have taken through my professional experience in working with undocumented high school students as they attempt to understand and to navigate their path through their high school education into adulthood and college. The recommendations made in this section include recommendations for practice and for future research.

### Recommendations for Practice

As we move into this new era of immigration reform created by DACA and the potential for increased access to college for undocumented students, the level of access to accelerated learning options may change. In that regard, when opportunities are presented for increased access, educators can better serve those whose status impacts their ability to participate in accelerated learning through a more thorough understanding of the changing laws related to immigration and tuition. It is critical for counselors and teachers at the high school level to understand what the changes will mean for their students and to serve as a conduit of information.

The changes that have occurred around DACA illustrate how rapidly the situation can change for students. As noted by the counselor participating in this study, when enacted DACA was a surprise and generated some confusion for schools as they struggled to understand the needs of the families as they move forward in the process. Its implications for student access to dual or concurrent enrollment programs remained unknown at the high school level. As such, schools should consider training counselors in the trends of immigration reform to better serve students needs at each campus, preferably including staff members who possess the ability to communicate freely with

parents in their native language either through personal knowledge or the use of an interpreter. This would enable the high school to serve as a meaningful point of contact for a community that relies upon the school's knowledge of higher education and to assist in navigating the DACA process, increasing the understanding of the potential changes in tuition related to having a work permit.

In a higher education setting, the ability to communicate effectively to staff and student alike requires knowledge of the changes made in immigration law and the access secondary students have to college courses, as well clear directives from governing boards at the community college level or from the Board of Regents at the university level. Dual enrollment coordinators, college recruiters, and enrollment advisors currently serve their constituents well by understanding how tuition and Prop 300 affect undocumented students in high school and as they apply for post-secondary opportunities. It is important for these employees to understand their institutional response to DACA, access to work permits and the potential changes to policy as future legislation occurs at both the state and federal levels, and how to resolve the potential for laws that work across purposes. Colleges and universities should continue to develop relationships with citizens who support their mission of educating students who are undocumented to develop scholarship programs to encourage continued enrollment in higher education.

Finally, employees at the college level and high school level should communicate regularly with each other regarding changes in policies that affect undocumented students' ability to participate fully in dual enrollment or beyond high school. There is a challenge for high school employees, however, that a student's status is unknown unless

students or families self-identify. Without specific knowledge of which student needs the support of the staff at that level, schools are often limited to a passive approach in providing information to students who are undocumented. However, that passivity potentially places students in a situation where they see no alternatives and could become resigned to their situation. To that end, information regarding status and its impact should be discussed openly and nonjudgmentally as discussions around dual or concurrent enrollment take place. However, there is a delicate balance in having those conversations and ensuring that students and families do not feel targeted for intervention when it is unwarranted or unwanted.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This study relied upon the experiences of adults that were reflecting upon their experiences as high school students who graduated between 2008 and 2011. Future research regarding the impact of Proposition 300 and similar tuition policies should seek to gain entry with a student population currently attending high school to explore the concepts as they impact current secondary level students.

The impact of DACA and other immigration laws for undocumented students continues to develop and to evolve. Future research may focus upon the choices made in applying for DACA and its resulting impact upon the educational, social, and emotional lives of undocumented students and their families. There is potential for a longitudinal study as well regarding those who apply for DACA and those who are ineligible, investigating the trajectories they experience following high school.

An additional opportunity for future research involves exploring membership and assimilation by completing a comparative study of those undocumented students who

identify as college-bound and those who do not. That contrast was not represented in this study because all of the participants had completed college credits and each identified themselves as college-bound. In addition, the trajectories of assimilation may vary based upon other variables that were not explored, including level of engagement in high school, socio-economic stratification within the undocumented community, and cultural differences related to other ethnic origins. In Arizona, the predominant population of undocumented persons are from Latin America; however that may not be true for other populations across the country where other laws, similar to Prop 300, exist.

Access to community college employees who work with dual enrollment programs could provide another avenue for future research. As noted in her interview, the ASU employee discussed the idea of college employee as *de facto* immigration officers and how that responsibility affects their view of the work they do with students. The tensions that exist between their desire to help others and the requirements of the law may provide some interesting insights into their experiences with undocumented students. Some possible questions to explore include:

1. How do laws such as Prop 300 impact those who are at the student service level in college and university guidance and admissions?
2. How does the mission of the college's dual enrollment program contrast with the policies that create a stratification of access for high school students due to status?

The options presented for additional study would continue to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of tuition policy as it relates to undocumented high school students. Additional studies would broaden the perspective and provide unique

perspectives in investigating how these issues are played out in policy, educational institutions and in the lives of those most affected.

## Limitations

My inability to access the high school student population I work with represented a significant challenge to this study. Gaining entry into another secondary school as a non-employee seeking to interview representatives of a vulnerable population was an unrealistic goal due to the sensitive nature of the topic and the need to identify members of a population at risk of potential harm should there be a breach of confidentiality.

To that end, this study's validity extends to those who participated as a part of this study and are not generalizable to the population as a whole. The concept of external validity relates to the ability of the research to transfer to other populations. For this study, the intent was to seek out students who fit a particular set of criteria and to engage them at a personal level regarding their experiences in high school around the topics presented. Their experiences, as with the experiences of the employees and parents involved, are unique to this study and therefore should not be ascribed to another population, however similar the demographics. Additionally, the experiences I have had professionally and personally related to this issue provides a unique perspective that creates a unique study that cannot be replicated.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the changes being made on the federal level regarding deferred action meant that this study was subjected to the tide of current events. The conversations occurred in a specific time and space whose reality was altered significantly in a few short months. While preparing this study, the DREAM Act seemed distant; however as the study got underway, there was already evidence of the changes

that occurred because of DACA. It is tempting to speculate that the conversation and findings would have been significantly different if they had occurred before the June 2012 announcement of the policy by President Obama, but such speculation does not meet the parameters of this study.

An additional limitation to this study includes the limited access to parents. Noted earlier in this work, some of the challenges to securing the participation of parents stemmed from my lack of fluency in Spanish. Perhaps more significantly, the climate of fear expressed to the ASU student who served as my recruiter for the parent participants revealed how insecure in their homes these individuals feel. The small number of parent participants reflects that anxiety of potential discovery and deportation pervasive in the lives of the undocumented.

## Summary

For the past eight years, I have been privileged to know and work with many individuals whose experience living "in the shadows", without documentation, is humbling. As the researcher in this study, that experience has increased the depth of my understanding beyond the question of access to college for high school students affected by Prop 300. Rather, the triangulation of other educators' voices, the role of family, and the resolve of the students combine with my personal experience to add greater understanding of these issues. As a former high school counselor often engaged in difficult conversations regarding status, I thought that my understanding of the issues was complete, however that was not the case.

The purpose of this study was to identify the educational, social, and emotional effects of Proposition 300 upon undocumented high school students who seek dual

enrollment as part of their high school program. In the study, the experiences of nine former high school students, their parents' stories, and the interactions educators have with undocumented students blend together to illustrate the impact such laws have when applied to a high school setting. The significance of the Supreme Court ruling in *Plyler v. Doe* informed the choice of topics as it relates to students who are here without legal status. The establishment of a situation where there are two separate experiences of access to advanced coursework for high school students, solely based upon ability to pay tuition rates delineated by status, seems counter to the spirit of that court decision. In the decision, the court stated

> 'the illegal alien of today may well be the legal alien of tomorrow,' and that without an education, these undocumented children, 'already disadvantaged as a result of poverty, lack of English-speaking ability, and undeniable racial prejudices, . . . will become permanently locked into the lowest socio-economic class.' (Plyler v. Doe, 1982)

There is immediacy in this study as the situations the individuals describe have already changed over the course of this research. As explained throughout this document, the deferred action program changes the conversation, not only for the student and their families, but also for educators in secondary and in higher education.

As recently as January 2013, movement toward immigration reform has gained traction in the Senate and in the White House (Preston, 2013). Admittedly, this document may become a historical record, a snapshot of where we were for a brief time regarding undocumented students in our schools. Until that time, this document serves as a reminder of the implications of state and federal policies that impact individuals whose goals are no different than the peers seated next to them, yet their struggle to achieve

beyond their parents station intersects laws that establish barriers to access the courses they need to jump start their college education.

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# APPENDIX A

# INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

| | |
|---|---|
| **To:** | Joshua Barnett |
| **From:** | Mark Roosa, Chair<br>Soc Beh IRB |
| **Date:** | 08/24/2012 |
| **Committee Action:** | **Exemption Granted** |
| **IRB Action Date:** | 08/24/2012 |
| **IRB Protocol #:** | 1208008166 |
| **Study Title:** | The Impact of Arizona's Prop 300 on Undocumented High School Students |

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

# APPENDIX B

# RECRUITMENT FORMS

**Recruitment script**
My name is Joel Laurin. I am a Doctoral student at Arizona State University, who is conducting research about how Arizona's Prop 300 has impacted undocumented students.

(Alternatively for interpreter: My name is _____ and I am contacting you on behalf of Joel Laurin, a Doctoral student at ASU who is conducting research about how Arizona's Prop 300 has impacted undocumented students.)

I am asking you to participate in this study to help better understand the experiences of students who sought to enroll in college courses but my have had issues related to tuition rates. I am asking individuals that represent different areas to comment on the law and their lives.

> ***If recruiting students:*** As a former high school student, you will be asked to participate in a focus group, with two to three other individuals that have had similar experiences with dual or concurrent enrollment while in high school.
>
> ***If recruiting parents:*** As a parent, you will be interviewed regarding your child's experiences when they were in high school and how their status affected their experience overall.
>
> ***If recruiting employees:*** As an employee, you will be asked to participate in an interview to describe your experiences working with students who were affected by Prop 300 as a high school student.

The interviews will be recorded, however notes may be taken during our conversation. After the interviews are done, they will be transcribed, word for word. After the study is done, the recordings and copies will be deleted. In order to protect your identity, names will not be used during the interviews, nor will they be used in any written form.

Did you have any questions? *(Respond as needed for clarification)* Do you agree to participate in the study to participate under the conditions I have described to you?

*(Set date for interview:_____)*

*(This can be done as a second contact.)*

Thank you for your time.

I confirm that this individual has agreed to participate in this study. _____

Participant identifying number _____ Date_____

This participant is a (circle one) **Student** **Family Member** **Employee**

# APPENDIX C

# INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**********

**CONSENT FORM – Adult Student Focus Groups**

*The impact of Arizona's Prop 300 on undocumented high school students*

## INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to affirm the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

## RESEARCHERS

Joel Laurin, Doctoral Candidate under the supervision of Dr. Joshua Barnett PhD., of the Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College at Arizona State University has invited your participation in a research study.

## STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to focus on the impact of Arizona's Proposition 300 on students educational experiences related specifically to dual/concurrent enrollment while in high school. While several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of how non-resident tuition policies have affected undocumented college students, there is little information about the impact upon high school students when they seek dual enrollment opportunities.

## DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

If you decide to participate, then as a study participant you will join a study involving research to better understand the experiences of undocumented high school students who sought to enroll in college courses but my have had issues related to tuition rates due to Arizona's Prop 300. I am asking individuals that represent different areas to comment on the law and their lives. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time and are not required to answer all questions asked.

I am inviting you to participate in a **focus group** conversation, comprised of students with similar high school experiences that have graduated from high school within the last four years (2009-2012). Your conversation will center on Prop 300 and its impact on your life while you were a high school student as well as your educational goals, and your experiences in high school. The focus group will have three to four members participating in the discussion. You will be asked to respond to a series of questions. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop participation at any time.

If you say YES, then your participation will last for approximately one hour, location TBD. Approximately 12 adult student subjects will be participating in this study.

**RISKS/CONFIDENTIALITY**

The information obtained in this study could cause problems for you if others learned about it. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law (such as being a danger to yourself or to others). The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but I will not identify you. Therefore, the following steps will be taken to protect you from harm and ensure your information remains confidential:

1. Interviews will be conducted in a private and secure setting.
2. I will record verbal assent of participation, without written signatures, for all student and parent participants. This will keep personal information from being attached to participants in the interviews.
3. Names will not be used during the interview.
4. I will securely delete all digital recordings upon completion of the study.
5. Only one electronic version of the transcription will be kept but it will be on a secure computer, with a password protecting it. That copy will be deleted when the study is finished.
6. Any information I used to contact participants, such as phone numbers or messages, will be destroyed immediately after each interview is finished.

Responses in this interview will be anonymous. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

**BENEFITS**

Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of your participation in the research are increased awareness to this issue that reflects high school students caught in between college access during high school and the federal right to a public education. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

**NEW INFORMATION**

If I find new information during the study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then I will provide this information to you.

**WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE**

It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time.

**COSTS AND PAYMENTS**

There is no payment for your participation in the study.

**COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY**

If you agree to participate in the study, then your consent does not waive any of your legal rights. However, no funds have been set aside to compensate you in the event of injury.

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT**

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered me, Joel Laurin, at [redacted] or Dr. Joshua Barnett, [redacted]. If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at [redacted].

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By agreeing to participate in this study, you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In verbally agreeing to this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be given to you.

I would like to digitally record the audio portion of this focus group. You will not be recorded, unless you give permission. If you give permission for recording, you have the right to ask that recording be stopped. Recordings will be stored on a secured electronic storage device; password protected, and deleted securely following the course of the study. The conversation will be transcribed from the recording. Mr. Laurin may take notes during the session as well. Following transcription, Mr. Laurin will provide a copy of the transcription for you to review. Copies will need to be returned to Mr. Laurin, who will shred the documents. Once the study has been completed, audio files will be securely deleted and one electronic copy of the transcript will be securely stored digitally.

Should you choose not to be recorded, but wish to participate in the study, the following options are available to you:

1. Answer questions during the discussion group in writing. This will enable you to hear the responses of the other participants while you scribe your own responses.
2. Respond independently to the questions in writing, submitted to me.

Do you agree to participate in the study the conditions I have described to you?
Yes No

**INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT**

"I certify that I have explained to the participant the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have offered the subject/participant a copy of this consent document."

I have spoken to the participant in this study and affirm that they have granted permission to participate in interviews.

Signature of Investigator_____
Date_____

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**
**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**********

**CONSENT FORM – Parent/Family Member Interviews**
*The impact of Arizona's Prop 300 on undocumented high school students*

**INTRODUCTION**
The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to affirm the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

**RESEARCHERS**
Joel Laurin, Doctoral Candidate under the supervision of Dr. Joshua Barnett PhD., of the Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College at Arizona State University has invited your participation in a research study.

**STUDY PURPOSE**
The purpose of the research is to focus on the impact of Arizona's Proposition 300 on students educational experiences related specifically to dual/concurrent enrollment while in high school. While several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of how non-resident tuition policies have affected undocumented college students, there is little information about the impact upon high school students when they seek dual enrollment opportunities.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY**
If you decide to participate, then as a study participant you will join a study involving research to better understand the experiences of undocumented high school students who sought to enroll in college courses but my have had issues related to tuition rates due to Arizona's Prop 300. I am asking individuals that represent different areas to comment on the law and their lives. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to be in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond or act as part of the study. Even if you start the study, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study at any time and are not required to answer all questions asked.

I am inviting you to participate in an interview about this topic. As a parent/family member, your conversation will center on education, Prop 300 and its impact on high school students. You will be asked to respond to a series of questions. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop participation at any time.

If you say YES, then your participation will last for approximately one hour, location TBD. Approximately 4 parents/family members will be participating in this study.

**RISKS/CONFIDENTIALITY**
The information obtained in this study could cause problems for you if others learned about it. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is

required by law (such as being a danger to yourself or to others). The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but I will not identify you. Therefore, the following steps will be taken to protect you from harm and ensure your information remains confidential:

1. Interviews will be conducted in a private and secure setting.
2. I will record your verbal assent for participation, without written signatures. This will keep personal information from being attached to participants in the interviews.
3. Names will not be used during the interview.
4. I will securely delete all digital recordings upon completion of the study.
5. Only one electronic version of the transcript will be kept but it will be on a secure computer, with a password protecting it. That copy will be deleted when the study is finished.
6. Any information I used to contact participants, such as phone numbers or messages, will be destroyed immediately after each interview is finished.

Responses in this interview will be anonymous. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

**BENEFITS**

Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of your participation in the research are increased awareness to this issue that reflects high school students caught in between college access during high school and the federal right to a public education. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

**NEW INFORMATION**

If I find new information during the study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then I will provide this information to you.

**WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE**

It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time.

**COSTS AND PAYMENTS**

There is no payment for your participation in the study.

**COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY**

If you agree to participate in the study, then your consent does not waive any of your legal rights. However, no funds have been set aside to compensate you in the event of injury.

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT**

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered me, Joel Laurin, at [redacted] or Dr. Joshua Barnett, [redacted]. If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can

contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at [redacted]

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By agreeing to participate in this study, you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In verbally agreeing to this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be given to you.

I would like to digitally record the audio portion of this interview. You will not be recorded, unless you give permission. If you give permission for recording, you have the right to ask that recording be stopped. Recordings will be stored on a secured electronic storage device; password protected, and deleted securely following the course of the study. The conversation will be transcribed from the recording. I may take notes during the session as well. Once the study has been completed, audio files and transcripts will be securely deleted.

Should you choose not to be recorded, but wish to participate in the study, the following options are available to you:

1. Answer questions during the discussion group in writing. This will enable you to hear the responses of the other participants while you scribe your own responses.
2. Respond independently to the questions in writing, submitted to me.

Do you agree to participate in the study the conditions I have described to you? Yes
No

**INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT**

"I certify that I have explained to the participant the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have offered the subject/participant a copy of this consent document."

I have spoken to the participant in this study and affirm that they have granted permission to participate in interviews.

Signature of Investigator_____
Date_____

**FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO**
**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**********

**FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO – Entrevistas para Padres / miembros de Familia Entrevistas miembros**

*El impacto de la Proposición 300 de Arizona en los estudiantes de secundaria indocumentados*

## INTRODUCCIÓN

Los objetivos de este formulario son para ofrecerle (como participante del estudio de investigación prospectivo) información que pueda afectar su decisión en cuanto a si debe o no participar en esta investigación y para afirmar el consentimiento de las personas que están de acuerdo a participar en el estudio.

## INVESTIGADORES

Joel Laurin, Candidato Doctoral bajo la supervisión del Dr. Joshua Barnett PhD., de la Universidad de Mary Lou Fulton y profesor en la Universidad Estatal de Arizona, ha invitado su participación en este estudio de investigación.

## PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO

El propósito de la investigación es centrarse en el impacto de la Proposición 300 de Arizona en los estudiantes y sus experiencias educativas relacionadas específicamente con la dual / concurrente matrícula en la escuela secundaria. Si bien varios estudios se han realizado examinando el tema de cómo los no-residentes han afectado las políticas de matrícula a los estudiantes indocumentados universitarios, existe poca información sobre el impacto en los estudiantes de secundaria cuando buscan oportunidades de doble matrícula.

## DESCRIPCIÓN DEL ESTUDIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN

Si decide participar, como un participante en el estudio, usted será parte de una investigación realizada para comprender mejor las experiencias de los estudiantes indocumentados de preparatoria que buscan inscribirse en cursos de la universidad, y que han tenido problemas relacionados con las tasas de matrícula debido a la Proposición de Arizona 300. Estoy pidiendo a individuos que representan diferentes áreas que comenten sobre la ley y sus vidas. La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Si usted decide participar en el estudio, su participación será anónima y nadie será informado de sus respuestas como parte del estudio. Incluso si una vez iniciado el estudio usted desea no participar, usted puede desvincularse si lo desea. Usted puede hacer preguntas sobre el estudio en cualquier momento y no están obligados a responder a todas las preguntas formuladas.

Los invito a participar en una entrevista sobre este tema. Como padre / miembro de familia, su conversación se centrará en la educación, la Proposición 300 y su impacto en los estudiantes de secundaria. Se le pedirá que responda a una serie de preguntas. Usted

tiene el derecho a no responder a ninguna de las preguntas, y dejar de participar en cualquier momento.

Si dice que SI, entonces su participación tendrá una duración de aproximadamente una hora, el lugar será a determinar. Aproximadamente 4 padres/miembros de familia van a participar en este estudio.

**RIESGOS / CONFIDENCIALIDAD**
La información obtenida en este estudio podría causar problemas para usted si otros supieran de él. Toda la información obtenida en este estudio es estrictamente confidencial a menos que la divulgación sea requerida por ley (por ejemplo, ser un peligro para sí mismo o para los demás). Los resultados de este estudio de investigación puede ser utilizados en informes, presentaciones y publicaciones, pero no voy a identificarlo. Por lo tanto, los pasos siguientes serán tomadas para protegerlo de daños y asegurarse de que su información permanezca confidencial.

1. Las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo en un lugar privado y seguro.
2. Voy a grabar su consentimiento verbal para la participación, sin firmas escritas. Esto evitará que la información personal sea conectada con los participantes de las entrevistas.
3. Nombres no será utilizados durante la entrevista.
4. Todas las grabaciones digitales tras la finalización del estudio serán borradas.
5. Sólo una versión electrónica de la transcripción se mantendrá, pero será guardada en un equipo seguro, con una contraseña que lo protege. Esa copia será eliminada cuando el estudio finalice.
6. Cualquier información personal utilizada para contactar a los participantes, tales como números de teléfono o mensajes, se destruirán inmediatamente después de que cada entrevista haya terminado.

Las respuestas en esta entrevista será anónimas. Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser utilizados en informes, presentaciones o publicaciones, pero su nombre no será utilizado.

**BENEFICIOS**
Aunque puede que no haya beneficios directos para usted, los posibles beneficios de su participación en la investigación será el incrementó en la conciencia sobre este tema que refleja los estudiantes de secundaria atrapados entre el acceso a la universidad durante la escuela secundaria y el derecho federal a la educación pública. No hay riesgos previsibles o molestias a su participación.

**NUEVA INFORMACIÓN**
Si me entero de nueva información durante el estudio que razonablemente podría cambiar su decisión de participar, entonces voy a proporcionar esta información a usted.

**RETIRO DE PRIVILEGIO**
Usted es libre de decir no. Aunque ahora haya dicho que sí, usted es libre de decir no más tarde y retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento.

**COSTOS Y PAGOS**
No hay pago por su participación en el estudio.

**INDEMNIZACIÓN POR ENFERMEDADES Y LESIONES**
Si usted acepta participar en el estudio, su consentimiento no suprime ninguno de sus derechos legales. Sin embargo, no hay los fondos que se hayan destinado a compensarle en caso de lesión.

**CONSENTIMIENTO VOLUNTARIO**
Cualquier pregunta que usted tenga sobre el estudio de investigación o sobre su participación en el estudio, antes o después de su consentimiento, serán contestadas por mi, Joel Laurin, al [redacted] o por el Dr. Joshua Barnett, [redacted] Si usted tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como sujeto / participante en esta investigación, o si usted siente que ha sido puesto en riesgo, usted puede comunicarse con el Presidente de la Junta de Revisión Institucional de Sujetos Humanos, a través de la Oficina de Integridad de Investigación y Aseguramiento de ASU, [redacted]

Esta formulario explica la naturaleza, las demandas, los beneficios y los riesgos del proyecto. Al aceptar participar en este estudio, usted se compromete a sabiendas de asumir los riesgos que este conlleva. Recuerde que su participación es voluntaria. Usted puede optar por no participar o retirar su consentimiento y dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin sanción o pérdida de beneficios. En acordando verbalmente este formulario de consentimiento, usted no renuncia a cualquier reclamo legal, derechos o recursos. Una copia de este formulario de consentimiento será dado a usted.

Me gustaría grabar digitalmente el audio de esta entrevista. Usted no va a ser grabado, a menos que usted dé su permiso. Si usted da permiso para el grabado, usted tiene el derecho de pedir que la grabación se detenga. Las grabaciones se almacenan en un dispositivo electrónico de almacenamiento garantizado; protegido con contraseña, y seguramente eliminadas siguiendo el curso del estudio. La conversación será transcripta a partir de la grabación. Puedo tomar notas durante la sesión también. Una vez que el estudio se haya completado, los archivos de audio y transcripciones serán eliminados de forma segura.

Si usted elige no ser grabado, pero desea participar en el estudio, las siguientes opciones están disponibles para usted:
1. Responda a las preguntas por escrito durante el grupo de discusión. Esto le permitirá escuchar las respuestas de los otros participantes, mientras que usted escribe sus propias respuestas.
2. Responda de forma independiente a las preguntas por escrito, mándelas a mí.

¿Estás de acuerdo en participar en el estudio de las condiciones que he descrito a usted?
Sí No

**DECLARACIÓN DEL INVESTIGADOR**

"Certifico que he explicado al participante la naturaleza y finalidad, los posibles beneficios y los posibles riesgos asociados con la participación en este estudio de investigación, se han contestado todas las preguntas que se han planteado, y yo he sido testigo de la firma anterior. Estos elementos del Consentimiento Informado se ajustan a las garantías dadas por la Universidad Estatal de Arizona y la Oficina de Investigación de Protecciones para Seres Humanos, para proteger los derechos de los sujetos del estudio. He ofrecido al sujeto / participante una copia de este documento de consentimiento. "

He hablado con el participante en este estudio y afirmo que me ha concedido el permiso para participar en las entrevistas.

Firma del Investigador_____
Fecha_____

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**
**MINIMAL RISK**
**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**
**********

**CONSENT FORM – University/School Employee Interviews**
*The impact of Arizona's Prop 300 on undocumented high school students*

## INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

## RESEARCHERS
Principal Investigator: Dr. Joshua Barnett, Assistant Professor, ASU West Division of Educational Leadership & Innovation, Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College
Co-Investigator: Joel Laurin, Doctoral Candidate, Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College DELTA Doctoral Program

## STUDY PURPOSE
Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of in-state tuition policies and undocumented college students, however none have explored the experience of high school students who attempt to take college classes while enrolled in high school and how tuition laws affect their secondary school experience. This study will focus on the experiences of these students. In addition, the study will interview parents, college and high school employees.

## DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research into the impact of Arizona's Prop 300 on the lives of undocumented high school students. You will participate in an interview with the researcher. Your conversation will center on your job responsibilities, how you have seen Prop 300 impact students' lives and the impact it has had on your work with high school students. Approximately four employees, two from high schools and two from universities, will be interviewed.

If you say YES, then your participation will last approximately one hour. You will be asked to respond to a series of questions related to your work with students.

## RISKS
There are no known risks from taking part in this study, but in any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

## BENEFITS
Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the possible benefits of your participation in the research are increased awareness to this issue that reflects high school

students caught in between tuition policy and college access during high school and the federal right to a public education.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Due to the nature of the study, the research team cannot guarantee complete confidentiality of your data. It may be possible that others will know what you have reported. In order to maintain as much confidentiality as possible, your name will not be used during the conversation. The conversation will be digitally recorded and transcribed. I may take notes during the session as well. Once the study has been completed, audio files and copies of the transcripts will be securely deleted.

**WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time.

**COSTS AND PAYMENTS**

There is no payment for your participation in the study.

**VOLUNTARY CONSENT**

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by Joel Laurin at [redacted] or Dr. Joshua Barnett, [redacted]. If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at [redacted]

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be given (offered) to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

| _____ | _____ | _____ |
|---|---|---|
| Subject's Signature | Printed Name | Date |

**INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT**

"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above

signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document."

Signature of Investigator_____

Date_____

# APPENDIX D

# PROTOCOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Data Collection

In addition to digitally recording the interview, notes were taken by hand to ensure that the information was captured. Hand written notes were taken in a journal in the following format. All recordings were transcribed and deleted following completion of the study.

Interview Notes Template

| Date/Time | Interviewee |
|---|---|
| Introduction/Purpose of the Study | |
| Questions: | Notes on Responses: |
| (See Chapter 3) | |
| Concluding statement/offer of review<br><br>Thank you | |

# APPENDIX E

## PROTOCOL FOR STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

| Date/Time | Focus Group Number |
|---|---|

Introduction/Purpose of the Study:
This study will be looking at DREAM Act students who tried to take college classes while enrolled in high school and how tuition laws, such as Prop 300, affected them.

| Questions: | Notes on Responses: |
|---|---|

1. Let's start by talking a little about each of you. Please tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your high school.
3. Can you share with me your family's story? How did you come to be in Arizona?
4. How would you describe yourself?
5. How would you identify yourself culturally?
6. What has been your experience as a member of your culture, living in Arizona?
7. In you opinion, what does it mean to be an "American"?
    a. Do you view yourself as American?
    b. What do you think of when you hear the phrase "the American Dream?"
8. What is your family's experience with education?
9. What messages did you hear from your parents regarding education?
10. How does your family influence your goals?
11. When did you first start becoming aware of the issues related to immigration status?
12. Since the passage of Prop 300, students who cannot prove residency have had to pay higher tuition for college classes while in high school or when they graduate from high school. What has been your experience with Prop 300?
13. When you were in high school, did you plan to take college courses through dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment? If so, how did Prop 300 affect you?
14. Has your experience with Prop 300 changed since you graduated from high school?
    a. How has Prop 300 affected your friends? Family members?

15. Recently, the President through the Department of Homeland Security began offering Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (individuals brought to the US as children.)
    a. Do you plan to apply for deferred action?
    b. What has that process meant to you and your family?
    c. How do you see this affecting your future?
16. This November is an election year and immigration laws are part of the election year conversation. If Obama loses in November, how might this change your future plans?
17. If you could talk to the leaders of our state or our country about your story, what would you want them to know?
18. Did you continue your education after high school?
19. What are your goals for your education?
    a. What resources do you have to help you pay for college?
    b. Do you have a "backup" plan? If so, what is it?
20. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
21. As a final question, what would you share with a current high school student who finds him or herself in the situation you were in during high school?

Concluding statement: Thank you for participating in this study and sharing your thoughts.

# APPENDIX F

## PROTOCOL FOR PARENT INTERVIEWS

| Date/Time | Interviewee Number |
|---|---|

Introduction/Purpose of the Study:

This study will be looking at DREAM Act students who tried to take college classes while enrolled in high school and how tuition laws, such as Prop 300, affected them.

| Questions: | Notes on Responses: |
|---|---|

1. Let's talk about the participant who referred you to this study first (son/daughter). *Vamos a hablar del participante quien lo refirió a este primer estudio (hijo/hija).*
   a. How would you describe this person? *¿Cómo describiría a esta persona?*
   b. As a parent/family member, how would you describe their experience with education? *Como padre o miembro de una familia, ¿cómo describiría su experiencia con la educación?*
2. Can you please describe for me your own experience related to education? *¿Podría, por favor, explicarme su experiencia personal en educación?*
3. What went into your decision to come to the United States? *¿Que determino su decisión de venir a los Estados Unidos?*
   a. What was that experience like? *¿Como fue esa experiencia?*
   b. What has your experience been like, living in Arizona?*¿Como ha sido su experiencia viviendo en Arizona?*
4. How have your educational experiences compared to your child's/family member's experiences? What are the similarities or differences? *Si compara su propia experiencia personal con la de sus hijos/miembro de la familia ¿Cómo describiría esa diferencia? ¿Encuentra usted alguna diferencia o similitud entre las dos educaciones?*
5. Since the passage of Prop 300, students who cannot prove residency have had to pay higher tuition for dual enrollment college classes while in high school or when they graduate high school. What is your opinion about Prop 300 or other immigration laws that were passed in Arizona? Have these laws impacted your family? If so, how? *Desde la aprobación de la Proposición 300, los estudiantes que no pueden probar residencia han tenido*

*que pagar una matrícula más alta para la inscripción en clases universitarias mientras asisten la escuela secundaria, doble inscripción, o cuando se gradúan de la secundaria. ¿Cuál es su opinión sobre la Proposición 300 y otras leyes de inmigración que se aprobaron en Arizona? ¿Estas leyes han impactado su familia? Si así es, ¿cómo?*

6. What has the impact of increased tuition been upon your family's educational goals? *¿Como el aumento de matricula ha afectado las metas educativas de su familia?*
7. What message would you want to convey to those who write our laws and those who lead our country? *¿Qué mensaje le gustaría transmitir a los que escriben las leyes y los que gobiernan nuestro país?*
8. What are your hopes for your family's future? *¿Cuáles son sus esperanzas and deseos para el futuro de su familia?*
9. As a final question, what would you share with current high school parents of a current high school student in a similar situation to your family? *Como ultima pregunta, que tendría usted para compartir con Los padres de un alumno en la escuela secundaria que se encuentra en la misma situación que su familia?*

Concluding statement: Thank you for participating in this interview process and sharing your thoughts. *Gracias por participar en esta entrevista y compartir sus pensamientos.*

# APPENDIX G

## PROTOCOL FOR EMPLOYEE INTERVIEWS

| Date/Time | Interviewee |
|---|---|
| Introduction/Purpose of the Study:<br>This study will be looking at undocumented students who tried to take college classes while enrolled in high school and how tuition laws, such as Prop 300, affected them. | |
| Questions: | Notes on Responses: |
| 1. Tell me a little about yourself and the work that you do. (What are your job responsibilities?)<br>2. What has been your experience working with unauthorized, undocumented or non- resident students?<br>3. Since the passage of Prop 300, students who cannot prove residency have had to pay higher tuition for dual enrollment college classes while in high school or when they graduate high school. What has been your experience of the impact of this tuition policy in your work with students?<br>a. How have students reacted to changes in tuition due to status? Have you had reactions from family members?<br>4. Has the students' reaction changed over the past few years?<br>a. Has your own interaction with students evolved related to this issue? What are those conversations like?<br>5. Have you seen this affect student's planning for the future?<br>6. Shifting focus a bit - In your opinion, what makes somebody a member of this society?<br>a. How do you define the "American Dream?"<br>7. Over time, how do you see this law affecting our schools? Our society as a whole?<br>8. If you had the opportunity to impact the policies related to this issue, what would you like to see happen? | |
| Concluding statement: Thank you for participating in this study and sharing your thoughts. | |